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FRONTIERS OF REFINEMENT: BORDER CROSSINGS IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC
TRAVEL NARRATIVE OF SALLY HASTINGS

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by
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ABSTRACT

Westward expansion and frontier mythology figure prominently in the formation of early national identity and citizenship. The role of genteel women travelers in this story, however, remains an understudied area of scholarship. This study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on a little-known but fascinating early-nineteenth century woman travel writer, Sally Anderson Hastings (1773-1812). Hastings chronicled her 1800 trans-Allegheny journey from her hometown in eastern Pennsylvania to a backcountry settlement near Pittsburgh in a book *Poems on Different Subjects, to which is Added a Descriptive Account of a Family Tour to the West* (1808). This dissertation uses Hastings' life and writings as a case study to explore early westward settlement from the perspective of a genteel woman traveler. Hastings was concerned with critiquing backcountry culture and society as she looked for refinement in the more rustic conditions. Her writings therefore reflect the larger ideologies and beliefs that shaped her life and illustrate how women acted as cultural transmitters in settling the West.

This study examines Hastings' travel account as both a lived experience and a literary expression. In the early chapters, I explore the physical challenges and social encounters Hastings described in her writings. Hastings inventively used her narrative to create new identities for herself as a courageous adventurer, explorer, and survivalist that sometimes conflicted with idealized notions of early republican womanhood. Then, in the later chapters, I look at Hastings' role as an author in context with women's literary and intellectual worlds. As a published travel writer, Hastings entered traditionally masculine territory. As such, I argue she used literary conventions in subversive ways to contribute to the cultural discourses of the time. Hastings thus carved out a public space for a woman's viewpoint on various topics, including

women's education, literature, philosophy, and landscape aesthetics, despite her marginalized status. In returning Hastings' voice to the historical record, this dissertation helps to complete the story of early national westward settlement and adds to our knowledge of women's intellectual lives in the Early Republic.

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Introduction

Great Nature, in her loose array,
Derives from Art no foreign aid;
The lofty Oak, the spreading Bay,
With 'shade still deep'ning into shade.'

The Moss, the Ivy, and the Vine
Increase the awful gloom profound;
Whilst Hills and lonely Wilds combine
To shed fantastic Terrors round!¹

~ Sally Anderson Hastings, travel narrative, October 1800

On October 31, 1800, Sally Anderson Hastings (1773-1812) sat down on a “trunk of a tree” at the edge of Pennsylvania’s frontier. She put pen to paper, determined to make sense of her new home in the “lonely Wilds” of the nation’s backcountry. As the above poetic musings from her travel narrative indicate, she was educated, introspective, and romantic. She had just completed a twenty-four day westward journey across the state, leaving behind her home in the East, to resettle in a sparsely-populated frontier community not far from the Northwest Territory (present-day Ohio). Hoping to escape a troubled marriage and begin a new life, the twenty-seven-year-old, genteel woman, trekked 250 miles mostly on foot, climbed mountains, and battled snow and rain storms. Sally overcame many physical and social challenges in her travels. Yet, upon reaching her destination, she did not express exhilaration over her physical exploits or satisfaction at escaping an unhappy domestic situation. Instead, she morosely declared, “My Spirits are sunk so low, that I may be said to exist, rather than live.” Sally hardly embraced the

¹ SAH, October 31, 1800, 208.

unfamiliar. Rather, she reflected on her new surroundings with sadness, suggesting an intriguing ambivalence that colors her narrative from beginning to end.

In 1808, Sally Anderson Hastings published her account of a westward journey from Donegal Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, to Cross Creek, Washington County, Pennsylvania. In some ways, her story feels familiar. A tale about a journey that also becomes a tale of self-discovery is a common one in a nation that has been defined by travel. As historian David Hackett Fisher notes, “If there is any constant in American history, it is that we are a nation of movers.”² This sentiment especially rings true when examining the history of trans-Allegheny settlement in the early national period. After all, when Sally published her travel narrative, thousands of Americans had already flooded into the new nation’s interior sections, lured to the frontier by Early Republican visions of opportunity, advancement, and adventure.³ Likewise, many travelers wrote about their experiences, conjuring up archetypal images of manly hunters, scrappy yeoman farmers, covered wagons, and a wilderness forest. Sally’s account does feature these elements of the frontier mythos most Americans learn about in school and see in the movies. But how does the image of a genteel woman, pen in hand, scribbling away in the forests of early nineteenth-century Pennsylvania fit into this national story? The answer to this question is what makes Sally’s narrative so fascinating and instructive.

Sally’s story is far more complicated than her narrative initially might suggest. To begin, Sally wrote at a time when women were politically disenfranchised and had limited educational

² David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2000), xii.

³ See Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

and employment opportunities. Furthermore, authorship and travel were considered masculine endeavors. Sally, thus, challenged early nineteenth-century gender expectations. When we consider travel writing from this period, men like Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, André Michaux, and William Bartram, readily come to mind. Their works stoked the American imagination and portrayed the frontier as a place of male exploration and discovery; white women were noticeably absent from their accounts. Sally's tale disrupts the status quo as the reader finds an unexpected *heroine*, an intrepid female explorer who, like her male counterparts, enters the public realm, marvels at nature, and survives physical ordeals. More significantly, Sally critiqued the backcountry society as she looked for gentility and refinement, giving an ambivalent viewpoint of the frontier that counters the more objective, scientific, and business-oriented male-authored works by men such as Joshua Gilpin and John Filson. Sally's writings therefore provide an interesting and rich source for me to analyze attitudes, beliefs, and values in the Early Republic, an era of tremendous cultural and social change.

Sally's unconventional voice complicates our understanding of Early Republican society and women's history. Looking closer at her actual experiences, we find Sally becomes even less conventional and more fascinating. Historian Linda Kerber and others have shown that early national Americans expected white, middle- and upper-class women to preserve the Republic and maintain social harmony as virtuous wives and mothers.⁴ This new womanhood ideal,

⁴ Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980). Kerber argued that women located their civic duty in the home as wives and mothers. Women were expected to instill virtue and civic responsibility into their children, especially their sons, to ensure the survival of the republic. This thread of scholarship has been well-researched by early national scholars, including Mary Kelley in *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Nina Baym in *American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790-1860* (Rutgers University Press, 1995); and

which identified separate spheres for men (public) and women (private), elevated women's domestic roles by assigning them the role of social guardian.⁵ Sally, born in 1773, came of age after the Revolution when this ideology was taking root and shifting more towards biological essentialism and the antebellum period's cult of true womanhood that ascribed submissiveness, piety, purity, and domesticity as innately feminine. A mother of three children, Sally nevertheless felt confined by domesticity. At a time when divorce was unusual, Sally left her husband. She also separated from her children for five years to travel and live in the West. A deeply intellectual woman, she called herself a poet and became a published author at the age of thirty-five. These activities brought Sally into conflict with idealized republican motherhood. A study of her life and writings provides valuable insights into gender norms. As historian Marla Miller argues, examining the lives of women "who tested the boundaries of social convention helps us better understand those conventions."⁶ Sally offers a rare opportunity to explore how a real woman negotiated prescribed social boundaries.

While most modern-day Americans have forgotten about Sally, she was well-known in her day as a writer. When she published her book *Poems on Different Subjects. To which is*

Rosemarie Zagari in *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). In general, they conclude that this ideology's impact on women is ambiguous. On the one hand, literacy rates for white women climbed, as a more rigorous education was required to be an effective teacher. On the other hand, women's legal and political rights eroded throughout this period, and women became more dependent on men.

⁵ See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer, 1966): pp. 151-174.

⁶ Marla Miller, *Rebecca Dickinson: Independence for a New England Woman* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2014), 4.

Added, a Descriptive Account of a Family Tour to the West; in the Year, 1800 eight years after her westward journey, she became one of the new nation's first travel writers and published authors in any genre (male or female).⁷ At the same time, she published in a genre, travel writing, that was chiefly limited to male writers from the period of 1700 to 1830. As scholar Susan Imbarrato points out, "Only journals of renowned figures or commissioned reports would have been printed in these women's own time."⁸ In fact, my research indicates that Sally may be the only American woman author to have her travel narrative published shortly after her journey in the early national period, making her book available to a contemporary readership of over 800 original subscribers.⁹ As a published travel writer, she contributed to the social and cultural discourses of the time and carved out a public space for a woman's viewpoint on various topics, including women's education, literature, philosophy, and landscape aesthetics.

To be sure, she achieved some small measure of fame in the nineteenth century that faded by the turn of the twentieth century. Upon her death in 1812, for instance, the *Washington*

⁷ Susan Imbarrato, *Traveling Women: Narrative Visions of Early America* (Athens, Ohio: University Press of Ohio, 2006), 2. Imbarrato points out the scarcity of travel narratives written by women from 1700 to 1830. She states that there are only about 50 known extant manuscripts. Of these manuscripts, some have been published, but their works were not put into print for a wider audience until decades or centuries after their deaths.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ George E. Hastings, *Sally Hastings (1773-1812): Poet and Pioneer* (New York: The American Historical Company, Inc.), 63-64. Lancaster printer William Dickson published Sally's book and announced its sale on February 9, 1808. As was common at the time, the book was financed by subscribers, who paid eighty-seven and a half cents per copy. An original printed copy of the book was 6 ¾' by 4 ¼.' A total of eight-hundred and fifty-four copies were sold. A list of seven-hundred and thirty-two subscribers can be found at the end. The book had a regional distribution with the majority of buyers living in Pennsylvania and others living in Maryland, Ohio, Virginia, and Delaware. Most subscribers were of Scotch-Irish heritage and included friends and family from both Lancaster and Washington Counties.

Reporter (May 4, 1812) eulogized her as a “bright genius,” an artistic recognition usually reserved for men, and called her “one of the first female Authors of the present age.”¹⁰ And in 1883, Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, who rarely mention women in their biographies on “Prominent Men,” wrote, “Sally has made Maytown famous in poetry. She was a remarkable lady, and may justly be classed among the celebrities.”¹¹ As Ellis and Evans suggest, nineteenth-century Americans found something extraordinary in Sally’s unconventional life history and her literary skills. But by 1906, when Lancaster historian, W.U. Hensel, rescued her book from a “rubbish” sale, Sally had not only disappeared from public memory, her writings also had lost their literary value. At that time, Hensel deemed his three-cent purchase a “worthy literary curio” and dismissed Sally as a “minor minstrel, somewhat rural and local.”¹² Unfortunately, this designation obscured the larger cultural value Sally’s work holds. There have been no serious scholarly works dedicated to Sally’s life or works in the last seventy-five years.¹³ I seek

¹⁰ George E. Hastings, 89.

¹¹ Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1883), 782.

¹² W.U. Hensel, “Sally Hastings: A Literary Grass Widow,” *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 10, no. 1 (1906), 371.

¹³ In addition to Hensel’s article, there are only two other 20th century scholarly works on Sally Hastings: George E. Hastings, *Sally Hastings (1773-1812): Poet and Pioneer* (New York: The American Historical Company, Inc., 1942) and Leon Howard, “Literature and the Frontier: The Case of Sally Hastings,” *ELH: A Journal of English Literary History* 7 (March 1940), 75, 80. George E. Hastings, a literary scholar and a descendent of Sally and Enoch, gives a biography and summary of the content of Sally’s book. He provides some literary interpretation at the end of the book. However, he does not take into account the social and gender constraints Sally faced as a woman writer and misunderstands her use of conventions and subjective style. Leon Howard, on the other hand, focuses more on a literary analysis of Sally’s poetry. But, like George Hastings, he was writing at a time before social and women’s history and read Sally’s work from a masculinist perspective, leading to misinterpretations and a summary devaluation of her artistic skill and creativity. One other text about Sally that should be noted appears in the

to return Sally to women's history and place her among Mercy Otis Warren, Hannah Foster, Judith Sargeant Murray, Phillis Wheatley, and other authors who have become important voices in early American literature.

My study connects to the scholarly conversations in women's history and early national literature about the social complexities educated women in the Early Republic confronted. Rosemarie Zagarri, Mary Kelley, Mary Beth Norton, and Lucia McMahon, in particular, have studied women's education and their literary worlds.¹⁴ They explain how increasing literacy rates and greater access to reading materials after the Revolution gave women better educational opportunities and connected them to print culture. However, they also point to the contradictory messages women received about their equality and intellectualism. As McMahon argues, "The belief that women were indeed mere equals of men, at least intellectually and socially, while at the same time profoundly different in body and station, generated conflicting models of womanhood."¹⁵ Although women were encouraged to be educated citizens, they were denied

Lancaster County Historical Society's journal in 1997. Written by Mary E. Karnes, the short article gives biographical information and summarizes the travel narrative contents and some of the poetry but does not offer a literary analysis or interpretation. Mary E. Karnes, "Sally Anderson Hastings: A Poetic Diary," *Lancaster County Historical Society Journal* 99, No. 1 (Spring 1997): 30-44.

¹⁴ Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2007); Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2008); Mary Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984, 2002); Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996); Nina Baym, *American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790-1860* (NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995); Lucia McMahon, *Mere Equals: The Paradox of Educated Women in the Early Republic* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2012).

¹⁵ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 5.

official political rights and instructed to keep within the domestic sphere. Sally's travel narrative, in particular, illuminates the conflicts between women's experiences and republican ideals.

Recently, historians have shown the value in using women's travel narratives to study early American cultural history. Deemed trivial and insignificant at one time, women's travel narratives and diaries such as Sally's work often remained unstudied and hidden away in archives. Historians, including Julie Roy Jeffrey, John Mack Faragher, and Glenda Riley, recovered travel accounts from the mid- to late-nineteenth century Oregon Trail period, bringing to light new views and perceptions of the West that undermined gender stereotypes. Their work demonstrated that women's experiences of travel and resettlement differed greatly from men's experiences. Significantly, they showed the importance of returning women's literary voices to the historical record, thereby broadening our understanding of early westward migration.¹⁶

The writings of Early Republican women travelers, however, remains an understudied topic. One exception is Imbarrato's *Traveling Women: Narrative Visions of Early America* (2006). In her work, she examines twenty-five women's manuscript accounts from 1700 to 1830, including the much anthologized journals of eighteenth-century travelers Sarah Kemble Knight and Elizabeth House Trist, as well as the lesser-known nineteenth-century works of Margaret Van Horn Dwight and Susan Edward Johnson. Imbarrato provided me with important insight into women's roles as culture purveyors in the Pennsylvania and Ohio frontiers. She

¹⁶ Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Frontier Women* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1979); John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979); Glenda Riley, *The Female Frontier: A Comparative View of Women on the Prairie and the Plains* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

argues that women's travel texts are "key" sources in helping us understand the active part genteel women played and shows how class and gender factored into women's perceptions of themselves and their world.¹⁷ Even so, Imbarrato's attention to solely manuscript sources leads her to ignore Sally Anderson Hastings' published narrative.¹⁸

Previous scholars have not looked at the interplay between Sally's narrative and sentimental fiction. As Catherine Kelly argues, literary culture gave early national women organizational structures, vocabulary, and a means to interpret their worlds. The way in which writing, reading, and the visual environment were inextricably twisted together in the Early Republic period, Kelly notes, remains an understudied area.¹⁹ Sally claimed the mantle of "Authoress" for herself and fashioned her writing after the period's popular literature. The literary value of her work and its connections to the wider aesthetic world, however, have not been explored. No studies recognize the ways in which Sally was "blurring the lines between author, reader, and narrator," as Watts writes in his study of Sally's contemporary, Royall Tyler, to both conform to and contest early republican cultural standards.²⁰ No studies look at the

¹⁷ Imbarrato, 213-214.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2. Imbarrato notes, "Only journals of renowned figures or commissioned reports would have been printed in these women's own time," thus scholars have needed to recover manuscript documents for their studies. Although other women writers' narratives have been published, their works were not put into print for a wider audience until decades or centuries after their deaths. Through research, I could not find another American woman-authored travel narrative written before 1830 published in her own time.

¹⁹ Catherine E. Kelly, *Republic of Taste: Art, Politics, and Everyday Life in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 5.

²⁰ Edward S. Watts, *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 77-78.

narrative as both a lived experience and a literary expression. This omission is not surprising as women's narratives were often devalued as trivial because their accounts focused more on social and domestic worlds.²¹ Peter Gibson Thomas wrote dismissively in his *Bibliography of the State of Ohio* (1880), Sally Hastings' "scarce little work" is "of no intrinsic value, and is quite a curiosity."²² In 1906, Lancaster County historian, W.U. Hensel, acknowledged the book's "considerable historical value" while relegating it to little more than "a literary curio."²³ Likewise, the only more recent look at the narrative, Mary E. Karnes' fifteen-page article published in 1997 for the *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society*, summarizes the book's contents but does not provide literary analysis. By ignoring the barriers women travel authors faced and how they traversed these boundaries, scholars have missed a proverbial cultural covered wagon.

Sally's narrative employs a popular letter framing device that most likely helped her transcend these barriers. As a woman traveler and writer, Sally crossed over from private female spaces into more traditionally male public spaces. Likewise, letters existed on the border between private and public spaces, as they were often read aloud and shared with family and friends. As Elizabeth Cook argues, the post-Enlightenment epistolary genre, or letter-narrative form, "played an important part in the reconfiguration and redefinition of concepts of private and

²¹ *A Midwife's Tale: The Life and Times of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 8-9. Ulrich exposes this same grievance in her seminal text about New England midwife Martha Ballard's writings when reviewing its past critical reception.

²² Peter Gibson Thomson, *Bibliography of the State of Ohio* (Cincinnati, OH: Peter G. Thomson, 1880), 159.

²³ Hensel, 371, 378.

public, for it represents the paradoxical intersection of these inherently opposed orders.”²⁴

Because personal letter writing was often associated with women, epistolary narratives brought the private into the public sphere. The epistolary mode, therefore, gave Sally and other marginalized writers a means into the literary public sphere. This access was especially relevant in the Early Republic when literary exchange was an important element of sociability and citizenship.

The letter structure also allowed Sally to fashion her own identity in connection to domestic spaces. In *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt argues that women travelers often organized their narratives “in a centripetal fashion around places of residence.”²⁵ In Sally’s case, the epistolary structure gave her an inherent permanency that contrasted with her mobility. She might oscillate back and forth from private and public spaces, but in the end, she always returns to a domestic space in which to collect her thoughts in the form of a “letter.” By writing to a fictional correspondent, Sally could create herself as a “subject” in her own story. This “subject,” the traveler, goes out onto the road, encounters danger, takes risks, explores nature, and speaks her mind.

The epistle-style convention was a format commonly found in popular novels. Sally’s writings provide evidence of her familiarity with romantic fiction such as Hannah Foster’s *The Coquette* (1797) and Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1748). Scholars have shown how women employed novels as educational tools, in addition to using them to work through their own

²⁴ Elizabeth Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1996), 12.

²⁵ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (New York: Routledge, 1992, 2008), 159.

emotional states and personal situations. Demonstrating the interplay between reading and writing, many early American women travelers adapted the epistolary mode to structure their own narratives. In *Reading the Early Republic*, Robert A. Ferguson explains how the epistolary genre allows a writer to reveal a story “in a form that best encourages reception,” an important consideration when the narrative may be contested. This genre, according to Ferguson, “governs [a] conflict in views by encapsulating them. The letters as artifacts convey the impression of reality and authenticity; these letters *were* written.”²⁶ Or, as Sally guaranteed, she would narrate the events “as they take place.”²⁷

In addition to their authorial power, letters allow a writer to elide social condemnation. As Ferguson discusses, letters operate as personal exchanges between individual writers and their specific recipients. In this regard, letter writers control their message’s point of view even if they are not in control of the events they describe. Writers can minimize, leave out, or justify activity and behavior that might be questionable. Sally, for example, often “addressed” a fictional “madam” when her depiction of events and experiences went beyond the bounds of expected female behavior. For instance, the terrible moment when she must forsake her role as a mother, she wrote, “You, Madam, can better imagine, than I describe, the variety of Feelings which agitate my Mind, as the moment approaches which is to separate me from my tender Infants.” Again, to justify her authorial role, she stated, “In compliance with your Request, I purpose to write you a familiar Journal of our Peregrination westward.” And later to describe a

²⁶ Robert A. Ferguson, *Reading the Early Republic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 133.

²⁷ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

social situation outside the bounds of polite society, she began with “O Madam, how little were his Feelings in unison with ours!” This integration of the epistolary mode into the travel narrative gave Sally a means to guard the real reasons for her journey, as well as protect her genteel status.²⁸

As both a woman traveler and a published author, Sally breached the domestic sphere in two ways. If we consider her nebulous domestic situation, it might be said she was a triple offender. Very few women in the early national period published their writings due to public censure. The epistolary format was a common mode that allowed women writers like Sally to maintain the pretense that they did not intend their work to be made public. “They are now offered to the Public, in compliance with the joint Solicitations of a number of persons, of the first Character,” Sally insisted in her preface.²⁹ This disclaimer, however, does not mean that was her real intention. Rather, Sally used the device to address male criticism. The fictionalized letter continued to the end of her narrative. She closed, “I have the Honor to subscribe myself, Madam, your most obedient, faithful, and very humble Servant. SALLY HASTINGS.” And, like any good storyteller, Sally marked the end of her tale with “THE END,” a standard literary convention that reinforced the blurring of the fictional and nonfictional modes used in the narrative.³⁰

Sally used her travel narrative to negotiate literal and literary frontiers. By taking a journey and writing about it, she created new identities that blurred the lines between the private

²⁸ SAH, October 7-31, 1800, 178, 179, 187, 209.

²⁹ SAH, 1808, 175.

³⁰ SAH, October 31, 1800, 209.

and public spheres or domains: she was both a genteel woman who saw herself as a moral guardian, and also as an author whose voice contributed to the new nation's cultural discourses. These identities frequently came into conflict mirroring the nation's larger struggle with issues of citizenship, class, and women's role in the republic. My examination focuses on the tension between national rhetoric of equality and notions of separate spheres and the paradoxes between republican motherhood ideology and actual experience. I argue that Sally's narrative exposes the contradictions that shaped women's lives within evolving notions of womanhood, class, and national identity. My dissertation thus expands our knowledge of the construction of middling- and upper-class gender identity in the early national period, as revealed in one woman's travel experiences.

I use Sally's travel narrative as the principle source for this dissertation. The travel account appears in her book as a thirty-two-page addendum. The book is 220 pages and includes 63 poems. The travel account traces her twenty-four-day trip across Pennsylvania from Maytown, Lancaster County to Cross Creek, Washington County in October 1800, in which she journeyed over the Allegheny Mountains. Sally used a conventional epistolary format to structure her narrative (which will be discussed in more detail in "Chapter Five" of this dissertation), writing an entry for each day of the journey, beginning on October 7 and ending on October 31, missing only five days.³¹ It is more than likely that she wrote the narrative, possibly from notes taken during the journey, sometime after the trip. She returned to Lancaster in 1805. There, William Dickson, a Lancaster printer and bookseller, sold subscriptions to her book

³¹ Sally's narrative contains no entries for October 14, 16, 18, 19, and 22, 1800.

beginning in 1806 and published it in 1808 (see fig. 1 for a map of Pennsylvania).³² As a published account that also acts as a vehicle of personal reflection and discovery, it is an ideal resource to investigate the intersecting threads between travel and authorship and between gender and identity at this transitional period.

In my study, I use Sally as a case study to illuminate the larger cultural, social, and political world of women living in Pennsylvania during the Early Republic period. I take an interdisciplinary approach that uses literary analysis conducted within a framework that considers gender, ethnicity, and class. I support this analysis with other primary sources, including family letters, newspapers, periodicals, family history accounts, philosophical writings, and popular literature. I also use public records, such as wills; deeds; tax returns; and census records, in addition to other period travel accounts, to ground the study and strengthen Sally's representational value.

I utilize a topical framework for this dissertation to allow for a better understanding of the larger significance of Sally's story. Chapter 1, "Beginning Crossroads: Family, Community, and Gentility," examines Sally's early life in Lancaster County. This focus provides perspective on her worldview, beliefs, and values. However, reconstructing her biography with traditional historical evidence (i.e. manuscripts and records) was no easy task. Other than her book and some letters, few traces of Sally's life remain. Unlike the male members of her family, there are no "official" public documents (except for a newspaper obituary) recording her existence. Even Sally's burial site is unknown. Nevertheless, in this chapter, I have attempted to give a picture of Sally's world by focusing on her childhood, family history, marriage, and community.

³² See note 9.

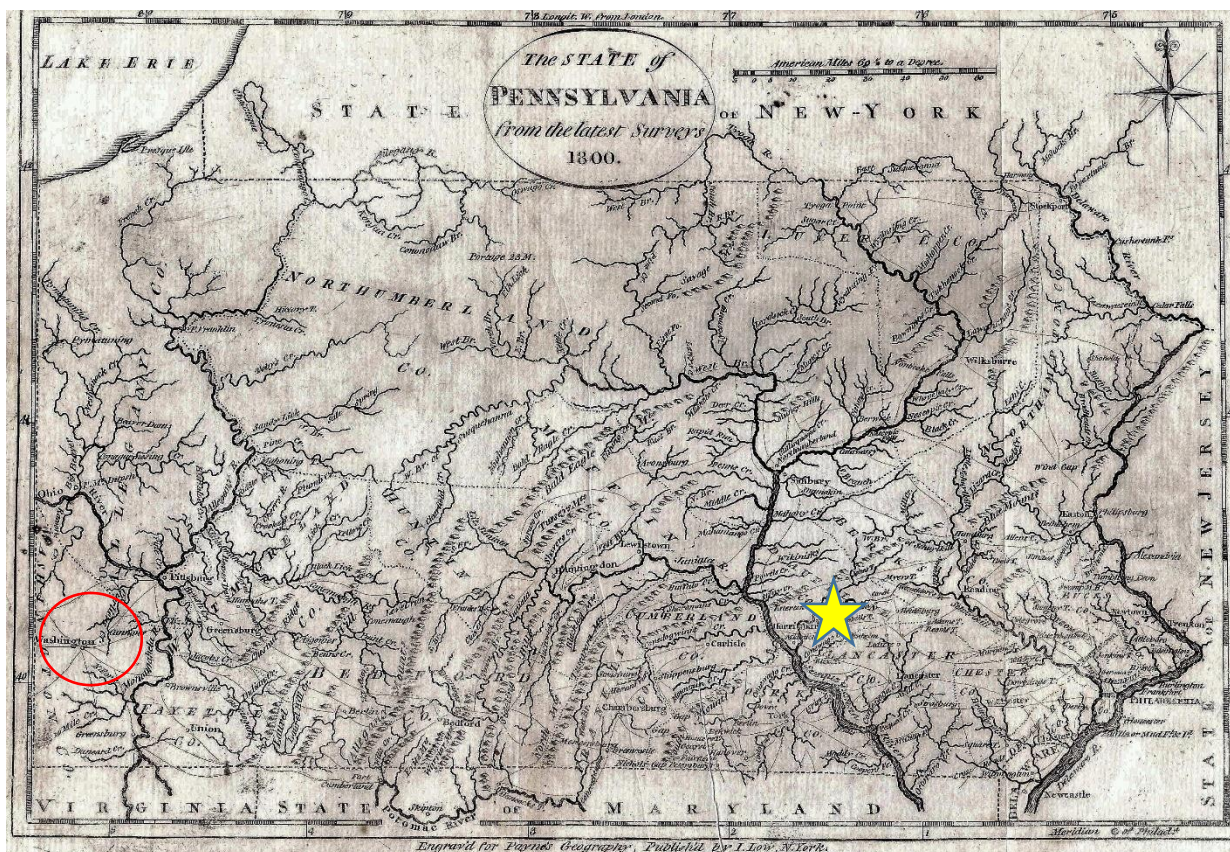


Figure 1. Map of the State of Pennsylvania from the Latest Surveys. 1800.

Published in John Payne's *A New and Complete System of Universal Geography* (New York: c. 1798-1800). The star marks Donegal Township's location in the northwest corner of Lancaster County; Sally's departure point for her 1800 westward journey. Sally's destination, Washington County, is circled in red at the southwest corner of the state. This map also shows three mountains Sally crossed in making her journey. *Source*: "1800s Pennsylvania Maps," *Historical Maps of Pennsylvania*, 2000-2017, accessed January 1, 2017, <http://www.mapsofpa.com/antiquemaps30.htm>.

At the end of this chapter, I address the concepts of sensibility and republican virtue as it relates to Sally's literary style and genteel identity.

The remaining chapters of this study, as well as the sections within each chapter, begin with short vignettes from Sally's narrative. I use this framework for two reasons: 1) I believe it is important to bring Sally's own words and voice back to life; and 2) I use the descriptive sketches as jumping off points to explore each chapter's main themes. Chapter 2, "Topographical Crossings: Travel, Hardships, and Nature," explores the physical challenges Sally encountered in making her journey and her literary interpretations of the natural landscape. I describe the aesthetic theories of the time, including the picturesque and sublime, and show how Sally applied these discourses in her travel account to mediate her surroundings. Chapter 3, "Social Crossings: Innkeepers, Drunkards, and Militiamen," examines Sally's navigation through Pennsylvania's backcountry social and cultural landscapes.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I switch focus from the physical and social aspects of the actual journey to looking at authorship and Sally's literary world. Chapter 4, "Authorial Crossings: Gender, Invention, and the Travel Narrative," attends to the literary landscape. I discuss Sally's self-fashioned identity as an intellect and a writer. This chapter explores the specific strategies and conventions, including the epistolary format and prefatory material and poems, Sally used in her travel narrative to elide social constraints placed upon women writers and travelers. Because Sally lived at a time when gender roles were in flux, sections of this chapter look at changing ideologies regarding women's education and citizenship. Chapter 5, "Literary Crossings: Novels, Allusion, and the Travel Writer," builds on the discussion in chapter 4 by focusing on women's trans-Atlantic literary world. In particular, I focus on the intertextuality of Sally's

narrative and the interplay between reading and women's travel writing. Sections of this chapter also analyze subjectivity and the different narrator types Sally adopted in her account.

Sally's life demonstrates the importance of adding women's perspective of travel and westward settlement to the historical record. In turn, women's writings reflect their perceptions adding to our knowledge regarding the defining of personal and national identity and gender roles in the Early Republic. In 1808, Sally returned to the West with her two surviving children. She lived with her brother Robert in the town of Washington, and assisted him in managing his domestic household, as well as his public affairs when he served as sheriff. For the last four years of her life, family correspondence shows that Sally remained socially active and continued to be intellectually engaged by her new frontier community.

Chapter One: Beginning Crossroads: Family, Community, and Gentility

This sight, my Friends, recalls remembrance dear,
 And, from my longing heart, extracts a tear;
 It represents the cloud-capt mountains high,
 Which separate my western Friends from me.³³

When Sally Anderson Hastings penned these poetic lines in September 1805, she was roaming around the Donegal Presbyterian churchyard in Lancaster County. But the words suggest that her “heart” belonged to a different Pennsylvania place—one in the West. In her wistful recollection about the people she left behind in Washington County, she tried to console herself by remembering the kinships that also tied her to Lancaster:

Come back, my wayward heart; no more complain;
 For here your dearest kindred do remain;
 And here caressing Friends to thee are giv’n
 With all the kind indulgences of Heav’n.³⁴

In 1808, however, Sally would leave Lancaster again and return to the “western Friends” she left behind in Washington. This time she would take her two surviving children with her. Sally died in Washington four years later and was buried in a cemetery there—far away from her Donegal family—in a location now lost to history. In 1812, Cramer’s *Pittsburgh Almanack*

³³ SAH, 1808, “A Landscape,” 123.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

announced that “Sarah Hastings” of “Washington County” died “April 30.” No such announcement appeared in Lancaster.³⁵

Yet, Sally’s identity was inextricably bound up in the place of her youth, with threads connecting to her family’s religious and cultural heritage. Donegal was at once rural and worldly. Founded in 1722 by Scotch-Irish farmers and Indian traders, it was a traditional religious society that also valued independence, reflected by its fierce patriotism during the Revolution. The Presbyterian Church, despite the building’s diminutive size, loomed large in the town’s social landscape during Sally’s time. Sally, who regularly attended the church (and most likely received some education there) from the age of ten, valued conventional Protestant notions of family hierarchy and social order, while also cherishing radical American ideas of liberty and freedom.³⁶ At the same time, Sally’s step-father, Brice Clark, a trustee of the church for decades, was a prominent member of Donegal society.³⁷ This status gave Sally access to trans-Atlantic beliefs, customs, and aesthetic ideas of the Enlightenment that informed the ideologies of the American Revolution and post-Revolutionary periods. Ironically, these same philosophies

³⁵ Zadock, Cramer, *Cramer’s Pittsburgh Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1813* (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear, and Eichbaum, 1813), 73.

³⁶ The first schoolhouse in Donegal Township was built at the Presbyterian Meeting House in the early 1700s (Ellis and Evans, 776).

³⁷ J. L. Ziegler, *Authentic History of Donegal Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia: F. McManus, Jr. & Co., 1902), 10, 12, 15. Donegal Presbyterian Church records detail the active part that Brice Clark played in church affairs. For instance, he was regularly chosen by the congregation as a trustee of the church from 1789 until his death in 1820. Notably, he was one of the first nine trustees of Donegal Presbyterian Church when the Pennsylvania Assembly granted the church a charter in 1786. In addition to helping collect the minister’s salary, some of Clark’s early tasks as a trustee included the preparation of “the several writings necessary” for the public sale of thirty acres of land added to the Church “Glebe” and oversight of the building of the graveyard wall.

undermined traditional hierarchical structures of class and authority which gentility sought to uphold. Hence, Sally's writings illustrate these tensions. When Sally travels from her childhood home in the East, through the backcountry and across the Alleghenies, these religious and cultural strands that are threaded into her identity go with her.

Sally Anderson Hastings' Family

Sally Anderson's parental heritage connects to Pennsylvania's early eighteenth-century Scotch-Irish Presbyterian immigrants who came from Colerain, Londonderry, Ireland. Records indicate that her father, Robert Anderson (b. 1734) was living in Maryland before he eventually moved to the Pequea Valley area of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.³⁸ He owned 104 acres of land on "both sides of the Old Philadelphia Road," also known as the King's Highway, near the little village of Intercourse in Leacock Township and was a member of the local Presbyterian Church.³⁹ By 1773, Robert, a blacksmith and farmer seemed to be established; he had cleared sixty acres of land upon which several cows, horses, and sheep grazed. Tax records also show that Robert owned at least one slave.⁴⁰ Robert Anderson married Sally's mother, Margaret Clark

³⁸ Application of Sons of the American Revolution, 1889-1970, *U.S. Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications*, Vol. 160, SAR Membership Number 31818; George E. Hastings, 2-3.

³⁹ Jay Warren Kaufman, ed., *Bicentennial Address Delivered at the Two Hundred Anniversary of Leacock Presbyterian Church, Paradise, Pennsylvania* (Leacock: Leacock Presbyterian Church, 1940), 12-13; Pennsylvania Land Warrants and Applications, 1733-1952, "Roger and Robert Anderson, Lancaster County, 15 April, 1763," digital image, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2350&h=112410&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043289265&usePUB=true>.

⁴⁰ Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration, 1768-1801, Robert Anderson, 1773, Leacock, Lancaster, 327, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016,

(b. 1748), the daughter of James Clark, on June 2, 1767.⁴¹ Margaret was nineteen years old; Robert, who had been a bachelor, was thirty-three years old.

The couple had six children—three boys and three girls—during the Revolutionary War period. Sally was born on March 25, 1773, the third child of Robert and Margaret. Sally’s brothers and sisters were: Rebekah (b.1769); James (b.1771); twins Robert and William (b.1776); and Margaret (b.1778). When Sally made her first journey to western Pennsylvania in 1800, all of her siblings, except for William (who died in infancy), were still alive. Rebekah, Robert, and Margaret were married. Not much is known about James except that he was living in Lancaster County at that time.⁴²

Sally’s parents appear to have been strong supporters of the patriot side during the American Revolution. Records indicate that Robert Anderson most likely served in the Lancaster County militia in 1777.⁴³ Margaret Anderson and the family’s slave Eve, according to

<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2497&h=1224015&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043289265&usePUB=true>; Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration, 1768-1801, Robert Anderson, 1772, Leacock, Lancaster, 328, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2497&h=1224015&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043289265&usePUB=true>.

⁴¹ George E. Hastings, 2; “Pennsylvania Church Records, Adams, Berks, and Lancaster Counties, 1729-1881,” *ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016,

<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7830&h=1965&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043289265&usePUB=true>.

⁴² George E. Hastings, 89. James Anderson became a Presbyterian minister; after 1817 or 1818, Anderson was living in New Orleans. He eventually settled in Kentucky.

⁴³ George E. Hastings, 93. George E. Hastings states that a “military draught” from Leacock Township cites Robert Anderson as a private; U.S. Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889-1970, vol. 160, ID 149, Samuel Ernest Anderson descendant of Robert Anderson, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016,

family tradition, baked bread and knitted stockings for American soldiers.⁴⁴ Although this story cannot be proven with full certainty, it does seem probable: first, historians have shown that many women contributed to the war effort in this way; second, records show that the Andersons did own a slave named “Eve.”⁴⁵ Sally’s father, however, would not live to celebrate the eventual American victory over the British. On December 7, 1778, when Sally was five years old, her father died. Her mother was now a widow with six children under the age of nine.⁴⁶

Sally’s mother, Margaret, quickly remarried Scotch-Irish widower Brice Clark (1739-1820) sometime between 1779 and 1780. Brice Clark was the son of John Clark, an Irish immigrant who had come to America before 1760 from County Derry and settled in New Castle,

<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2204&h=379253&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043289265&usePUB=true>. A letter from the Adjutant General, in Washington D.C. written to Margaret Lewis on 10 August 1916 asserts that Anderson was a sergeant in Captain Ross’s company, the third battalion of the Lancaster Militia.

⁴⁴ This story has been passed down in the family letters of Mrs. Lewis Bennett to Ezra P. Young (Sally’s descendants), see Mary E. Karnes, 30-44 and George E. Hastings, 3. Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration records (1768-1801) from 1772-1773 for Robert Anderson provide evidence that the family did own at least one female slave during the Revolutionary War period.

⁴⁵ See Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash* (2007); Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic* (1980); and Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters* (1980). The “Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration” for Leacock Township in 1768 lists “1” slave for Robert Anderson. Also, the family’s slave, “Eve,” is mentioned in the “Lancaster County Returns of Negro and Mulatto Children Born After the Year 1780 (1788-1793).” Sally’s step-father, Brice Clark, registered the birth of Eve’s “mulatto” daughter, “Venus,” as occurring in February, 1781, on March 27, 1789.

⁴⁶ Letters of Administration, Intestate Records, 1777-1781, 1779, Bond Book #2 and #3. Lancaster County Archives, Lancaster, PA; George E. Hastings, 3.

Delaware.⁴⁷ Clark and his first wife, Mary Crawford (b.1723) had two daughters, Mary (b. 1765) and Sarah (b. 1767).⁴⁸ According to Jacob Ziegler's *An Authentic History of Donegal Presbyterian Church* (1902), Brice Clark left Delaware "on account of the unhealthiness of the location" and moved to Leacock Township.⁴⁹ During the Revolutionary War, he served as a private in the Lancaster (Pennsylvania) militia.⁵⁰ Clark owned large tracts of land in both Leacock and Donegal Townships in Lancaster County.⁵¹ Upon their marriage, the property Margaret acquired when her husband died, which was valued at more than 11,000 pounds in 1779, now belonged to her new husband, Brice.⁵²

⁴⁷ Ziegler, 82-83. Brice Clark also had two brothers: William (1735-1818) and John (dates unknown). William moved with Brice to Donegal Township and is buried in the Presbyterian churchyard.

⁴⁸ Mary Clark Brisbin tombstone, Centre Hill Presbyterian Cemetery, Potters Mills, Pa., *findagrave.com*, accessed September 2, 2016, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=14317257&ref=acom>. Mary Clark (1765-1834) married John Brisbin (1760-1945) and is buried in Centre County, Pennsylvania; Sarah Curran tombstone, Donegal Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Mount Joy, Pa., *findagrave.com*, accessed September 2, 2016, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgibin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Curran&GSiman=1&GScid=312851&GRid=38593246>&. Sarah Clark (1767-1823) married James Curran. She is buried in Donegal's Presbyterian churchyard.

⁴⁹ Ziegler, 82. The Clarks' health concerns about the region were most likely connected to the outbreaks of yellow fever and other diseases in coastal areas and nearby Philadelphia.

⁵⁰ National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, *Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage Books*, vol. 079, no. 78355, digital images, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=3174&h=75928&ssrc=pt&tid=106873084&pid=100056007227&usePUB=true>. Clark served in Captain Henry Kendrick's company; Colonel John Boyd's 7th Battalion in 1777.

⁵¹ George E. Hastings, 6.

⁵² At this time, English common law prevailed regarding women's legal status. When a woman married, her legal rights were subsumed under her husband's, and she was known as a

The Clarks and Donegal Township

Brice and Margaret Clark moved their blended family to the Donegal Township area and laid down permanent roots. Upon their marriage, the couple already were the parents of seven children under the age of thirteen, five girls and two boys. In 1785, Brice purchased a large farm between Donegal and the town of Marietta which had at one time belonged to an Indian trader, Lazarus Lowry. According to a Lancaster County indenture dated March 7, 1785, Brice now owned 196 acres in Donegal that included all the “houses; outhouses; edifices and buildings; waters and water courses; horses’ paths and passages; woods and woodlands; and orchards, gardens, and meadows.”⁵³ The sizeable farmhouse and acres of farmland and wooded spaces provided ample space for the Clark’s growing family, as Brice and Margaret eventually had five more children: Elizabeth (b. 1781), Jane (1782), John (1785), Brice (1787), and Esther (1791).⁵⁴ While at Donegal, Brice Clark established himself as a prominent member of the community. He became deeply involved with the community’s Presbyterian Church, serving as one of its first

feme covert, as such she could not hold property in her name. Robert Anderson died intestate. (See note 44). The Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration list for Leacock Township in 1779 shows that Margaret Anderson owned the following taxables: 1 Negro, 1 horse, 3 cows, and 144 acres of land.

⁵³ Lancaster County Indenture, “James Anderson to Brice Clark,” March 7, 1785, Lancaster County Courthouse Archives.

⁵⁴ Karnes, 30. Today, this farm is located along Colebrook Road, just to the east of Maytown, Mount Joy, Donegal Township, Pa. This same farm became one of nine farms purchased later in the nineteenth century by Simon Cameron (1799-1889), noted Pennsylvania politician and Lincoln’s Secretary of War.

trustees in 1786. He remained an elder in the church throughout his life. He also was elected a member of the State Legislature in 1794.⁵⁵

Sally had a special relationship with her older sister Rebekah (1769-1801). When Sally separated from her husband, sometime before 1800, she moved into her sister's Donegal Township household (presumably in Mount Joy, a town about three miles east of the Presbyterian Church).⁵⁶ The arrangement proved to be mutually beneficial. Sally, who was now displaced from her marital home, had few options to become legally and economically independent. As historian Karin Wulf notes, married women at this time "occupied a subordinate place in society and within the household."⁵⁷ Women's legal status upon marriage was defined by the common law doctrine of coverture which required women to subsume their interests and obligations to their husbands' ownership. Sally, therefore, had no legal rights to the assets she and Enoch shared as a married couple. Rebekah recognized her sister's predicament and gave Sally a place to live. In return, Sally became Rebekah's caretaker.⁵⁸ From Sally's

⁵⁵ Ibid.; George E. Hastings, 6-7; Ellis and Evans, 761; William Henry Egle, ed. *Notes and Queries Chiefly Related to Interior Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1896), 38.

⁵⁶ The 1798 Pennsylvania U.S. Direct Tax for Lancaster County lists Joseph Barton as living in a house owned by the Reverend Colin McFarquhar, the Presbyterian Church minister, in Mount Joy, (now a borough) Donegal Township.

⁵⁷ Karin Wulf, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Cornell University Press, 2000), 89.

⁵⁸ In her travel narrative, Sally infers that her sister took her in after Sally's marital separation ("into whose Protection I have been thrown by the rough hand of Adversity," 178). Sally also notes that she has been Rebekah's caretaker in both the travel narrative and in family correspondence. I have not been able to determine where Sally and Enoch's children were living at this time.

travel narrative and letters, we learn that Rebekah suffered from consumption (or tuberculosis) and was in poor health. In October 1800, Rebekah and her husband left Lancaster County and resettled in Cross Creek, Washington County. Sally emigrated to the West with the Barton family to care for both Rebekah and Rebekah's children during the journey and afterwards in the Barton's backcountry home.⁵⁹

Sally remained in the Barton family household in Washington County until 1805 or 1806. Because Rebekah was in poor health, Sally became indispensable to the Barton family. Her domestic arrangement in her sister's household, however, was filled with irony. In assuming her new duties as a housekeeper and caretaker of the Barton family in the West, Sally relinquished her role as a mother to her own young children for four years. During this time, the Hastings' children stayed in Lancaster County, cared for by Margaret and Brice Clark. At Cross Creek, Sally devoted much time tending to the needs of her sister and caring for her nieces. Rebekah married Joseph Barton (d.1825) in 1794,⁶⁰ and the Bartons had three young daughters: Margaret (b.1795), Esther (b.1797), and Eliza Jane (b. 1800). Rebekah and Joseph would have one more daughter, Anna, born in the summer of 1801 in Cross Creek.⁶¹

Letters written to family from Washington, reveal genuine bonds of affection between Sally and the Barton family. Sally poked fun at herself for instance in one letter and tellingly

⁵⁹ This October 1800 journey from Donegal Township to Cross Creek, Washington County would become the subject of Sally's travel narrative.

⁶⁰ Egle, 133.

⁶¹At some point, these daughters moved back to Lancaster County, most likely with Sally when she returned in 1805. Rebekah's daughters never married. They are buried in the Donegal Presbyterian churchyard with the following inscribed dates: Margaret (1795-1876), Esther (1797-1839), Eliza Jane (1800-1815), Anna (1801-1820).

wrote, “I sometimes make *our little Family* [emphasis is mine] laugh at the Blunders I make.”⁶² She also referred to Rebekah as “Becky” and was with Rebekah when she was “brought to bed” with her last child. Sadly, Rebekah’s health deteriorated rapidly after the birth of her last daughter in 1801. As Sally wrote in a letter to her mother, “Becky” continued to have a “bad Cough” and was in a “weak state of body and mind.” Rebekah died before the year ended leaving behind a husband and four young daughters.⁶³

Sally also was close to her brother, Robert (1776-1836), a recent settler in the West who exemplified early national gentility in the backcountry. Historians, including Robert Taylor and Cary Carson have shown how American notions of self-reinvention and self-improvement intertwined with ideas about social mobility and refinement.⁶⁴ Robert, like other American migrants, took these ideals with him to the backcountry and established a genteel social status in the more rustic setting.⁶⁵ Sometime before 1800, he resettled in Pennsylvania’s frontier and achieved moderate success there as a farmer and business owner.⁶⁶ In 1789-90, Robert filed a

⁶² SAH to Margaret Clark, ed. In George E. Hastings, 39.

⁶³ Ibid., 37, 43-44.

⁶⁴ Alan Taylor, *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995); Cary Carson, “The Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand?” in *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1994), 483-697.

⁶⁵ Carson, 487.

⁶⁶ 1800 U.S. Census, Washington Township, Pennsylvania, p. 920, 921, Robert Anderson, digital image 127, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7590&h=458782&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043291105&usePUB=true>.

warrant and received a patent for approximately 98 acres of land in Allegheny County bordering Washington County which he named “The Triangle.”⁶⁷ In addition to his occupation as a farmer, Robert was a skilled silversmith. By 1800, he moved to Washington, the trading hub of the county, and opened up a “Clock & Watch-Making Business” with a partner, William Hutchinson, in the center of the newly-developing town (see fig. 2 for an advertisement announcing the opening of Robert’s Washington business).⁶⁸ Robert’s foray into a commercial enterprise illustrates a desire to improve his economic and social standing.

Other aspects of Robert’s life demonstrate a cultivation of genteel respectability. His family life, for example, shows that he was not afraid to assume the responsibilities of being a husband and a father. Robert married Elizabeth Agnew in 1799; they eventually had five children over the next eight years: a baby girl who died shortly after birth (b.1800), Samuel (b.1801), Robert, Jr. (1803), Elizabeth (1805), and Brice Clark (1808). Robert’s wife, Elizabeth, died suddenly of a “short but painful illness” on March 15, 1810, according to her obituary in the March 19, 1810 edition of the *Washington Reporter*.

⁶⁷ Pennsylvania Records of the Land Office, *Patent Index*, P Series, 1781-1794, no. 16 Robert Anderson, Allegheny Township, digital image, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17PatentIndexes/P1781-1794PatentIndex10.pdf>. According to this record, Anderson was issued a warrant for his land on August 20, 1789 and received a patent for his tract (titled “The Triangle”) on March 23, 1790.

⁶⁸ Boyd Crumrine, *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: L. H. Leverts & Co., 1882), 476-564.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE Subscribers wish to inform their Friends, and the Public in General, That they have just commenced in the House, formerly occupied by MR. JOHNSTON, and three doors below MR. PURVIANCE'S Tavern, *the Clock & Watch-Making business in all its various branches; also, Silver-work & Jewelry, done on the shortest notice and newest fashions, all of which they will do at the Philadelphia prices. They flatter themselves, that due attendance to business, will meet with liberal encouragement.*

N. B. Highest price given for old Gold and Silver. Orders from the Country duly attended to.

**ROBERT ANDERSON &
THOS. HUTCHINSON.**

Washington, August 9th.

Figure 2. Advertisement for Robert Anderson and Thomas Hutchisonson's Clock and Watch Business.

This 1798 advertisement announces that Robert Anderson and Thomas Hutchinson do work in the "newest fashion" at Philadelphia prices, revealing not only the Andersons' genteel connections to Eastern sensibilities but also the middling class aspirations of the area's settlers. *Source: Herald of Liberty, August 13, 1798, Vol. 1, Issue 27, p.3.*

Robert remained a widower until November 1811, when he married Jemima Taylor (see fig. 3) with whom he would have eight more children.⁶⁹ Robert's political interests also illustrate his desire to take on public responsibility. In Washington, he became a leading citizen and was elected sheriff in 1808 for a three year term. He later served as a state legislator in 1811 and 1812. As historian Robert Taylor points out, local offices, such as sheriff, judge, and assemblyman, were reserved for men who were considered to be the "better sort."⁷⁰ Robert's political positions reveal his class standing and show an ambition to climb the backcountry social ladder.

Genuine love and respect between Robert and Sally is suggested by family correspondence when Sally returned to Washington in 1808. At this time, she lived with her brother in the town of Washington, most likely helping his wife with household duties.

⁶⁹ *A History of the Presbyterian Church of Sewickley Pennsylvania* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1914), 180; Thomas Cushing, *History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania*, Vol. II, part 1 (Chicago: A. Warner & Co., 1889), 336. John W. Jordan, *Genealogical and Personal History of Western Pennsylvania* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1915), 237-238. Robert and Jemima moved to Leet Township in Allegheny County in 1825 where Robert served as the justice of the peace for several years and worked as a farmer. Robert died in an accident in 1836 when an ox cart loaded with wood fell on top of him and broke his neck.

⁷⁰ Taylor, 14.

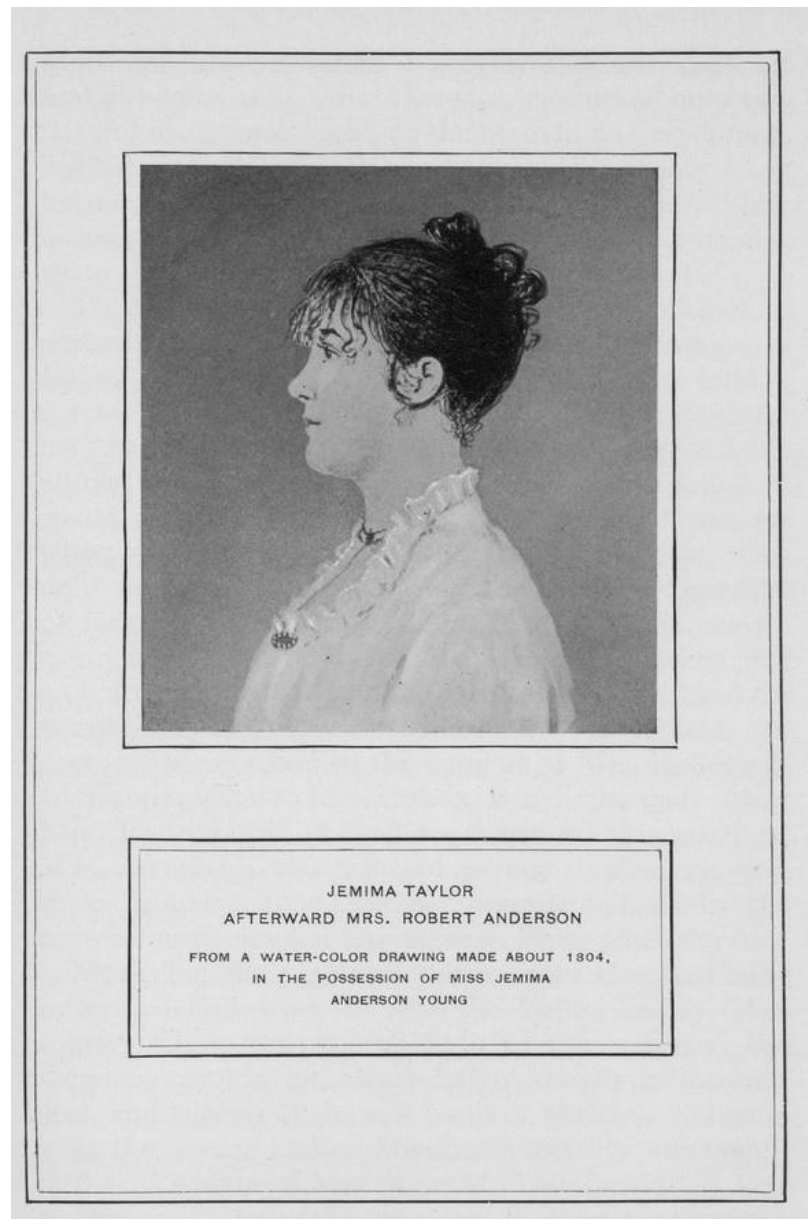


Figure 3. Portrait of Jemima Taylor Anderson (1787-1864), second wife of Robert Anderson. Abt. 1804. Taken from a watercolor.

Although a resident of a backcountry community, Jemima is depicted as a fashionable woman of refinement. Her dress, choker necklace, and hairstyle reflect neoclassical style tastes popular among middling and upper-class Anglo-American social circles. *Source: A History of the Presbyterian Church*, Sewickly, Pa. (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1914), 163.

An excerpt from a letter Sally wrote to her family in Lancaster in June 1808, illustrates the respectful friendship between brother and sister: “I enjoy every degree of indulgence from my affectionate brother, who gratifies my slightest wish and reposes the most unlimited confidence in me and invests me with every authority consistent with my situation.”⁷¹ After Margaret (Robert’s first wife) died, Sally took on more responsibilities in maintaining Robert’s household and caring for his children. A passing comment Sally made in an 1811 letter to her Lancaster County family sheds light upon her caretaker role in her brother’s home: “Clark [Robert Anderson’s youngest son] retained the corn in his nose for a space of eight days, when it disappeared in the night without leaving any trace of its passage. He is well and doing well.”⁷² In sharing this small detail about an incident involving one of Robert’s children, Sally poignantly revealed the motherly relationship she had with her nieces and nephews. [Fig. 4 depicts a chart of the Clark and Anderson families as descended from Margaret Anderson Clark].

⁷¹ SAH to Friends, June 29, 1808, in *Poet and Pioneer*, ed. George E. Hastings, 66.

⁷² SAH to Mr. [Samuel] Porter, n.d., in George E. Hastings, 87.

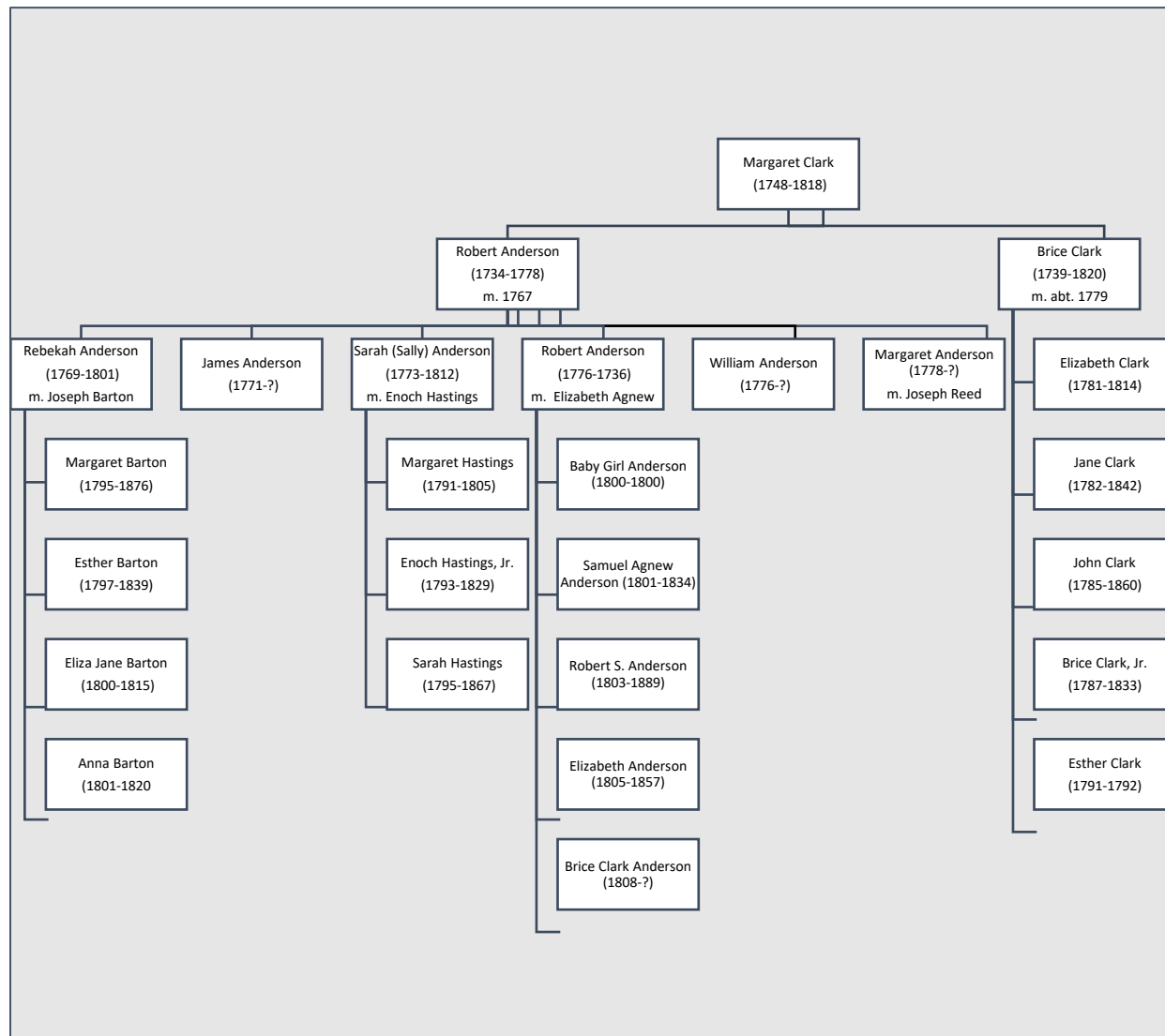


Figure 4. Margaret Anderson Clark family chart. This chart shows Margaret Clark Anderson’s children and grandchildren.

Donegal Presbyterian's churchyard reveals some of the Clark family history. A low stone wall, constructed in the 1790s under the supervision of Brice Clark, encloses the cemetery which is adjacent to the church building. Visitors entering into the churchyard will find more than a dozen large horizontal and vertical stone grave markers bearing the Clark and Barton names. Family members buried there include: Sally's mother (Margaret) and her stepfather (Brice) (fig. 5 depicts Brice and Margaret Clark's tombstone); half-siblings Elizabeth, John, Jane (Porter), Esther, and Brice, Jr; and the nieces Sally cared for in Cross Creek: Anna, Eliza Jane, and Margaret Barton.⁷³ The inscriptions on the stone and marble tablets do more than mark the names and birth and death dates of Sally's family. They tell us about the Clark kinship relationships and indicate the family's significant presence in Donegal's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century communities.

⁷³ Transcriptions can be found in Ziegler's *An Authentic History of Donegal Presbyterian Church* (1902).



Figure 5. Photograph of Margaret and Brice Clark's grave marker at Donegal Presbyterian Churchyard, Donegal Township, Lancaster, Pa.

The inscriptions reads: "In memory of Brice Clark, Sr. who departed this life Nov. 7, 1820 in the 81st year of his age. Also of Margaret his Wife who departed this life April 27, 1818 in the 70th year of her age."

Sally Anderson Hastings' Community: Donegal Township

Donegal's geographic location played a central role in its early history. The township lies within the northwestern section of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a position that made it a gateway into interior sections of the mid-Atlantic during the eighteenth century. Later divided into "East" and "West" sections, the original township was organized in 1722 and was one of the two townships comprising Lancaster County at the time of its establishment in 1729.⁷⁴ Before its division, the township was bounded on the east and southeast by the Chiques (Chickies) Creek and its northwest branch. Even more importantly, its other boundaries were key travel arteries that linked the east coast to interior sections: the Paxton and Conestoga Great Road on the north; and the Susquehanna River on the west (see fig. 6). As historian Judith Ridner notes, the Susquehanna River was the region's "most conspicuous" feature and served as a major commercial highway for many different peoples, including American Indians and Euro-American traders. As such, the river connected Donegal (and its people) to a larger web of transatlantic cultural and economic strands throughout the mid-Atlantic and Ohio valley.⁷⁵

The earliest European settlers in Donegal were Scotch-Irish, arriving between 1718 and the 1770s. These settlers, known as Ulster Scots, migrated from the Ulster area of Northern

⁷⁴ Ellis and Evans, 757. The township was divided into two townships, East Donegal and West Donegal, in 1838.

⁷⁵Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 4-6.



Figure 6. A Map of Lancaster County (1817).

This image from Pennsylvania's first official Lancaster County map depicts Donegal Township in 1817 in the northwest corner of Lancaster County with Dauphin County to the north and York County to the south. Maytown, Sally's home when she was married, is marked in the southeast portion of the county. *Source:* PHMC, Pennsylvania State Archives, RG-17, Records of the Land Office, Melish-Whiteside Maps, 1816-1821.

Ireland where their ancestors, who were lowland Scots, had settled as part of Britain's seventeenth-century colonization plan for Ireland. Almost all of the Scotch-Irish coming after 1718 were Protestant and Presbyterian. A combination of forces pushed these migrants across the ocean to North America, including a desire to escape religious discrimination by the Anglican Church of Ireland and economic hardships. The promise of abundant land and a chance for a better life lured thousands of Scotch-Irish immigrants to Pennsylvania's backcountry in the period before the Revolutionary War. They joined the many German-speaking groups who also settled Pennsylvania during this time. Although Pennsylvania was a pluralistic society, the different immigrant groups tended to settle in ethnic enclaves. The Scotch-Irish, in particular, clustered in farming communities and towns just east and west of the Susquehanna River.⁷⁶ So while they retained traditional aspects of their native culture by living in relatively homogenous communities, their position near a major mid-Atlantic travel artery gave Scotch-Irish settlers access to the wider Anglo-American economic world.

Donegal's early eighteenth-century community exemplifies this settlement pattern. When looking at the surnames of the first eighty-two settlers in the area before 1751, all but two reflect a Scotch-Irish background.⁷⁷ Over time, Donegal's residents became more diverse as German immigrants and those of African descent also lived and worked in the area. However, in 1782, people with Scotch-Irish heritage still made up more than seventy percent of the taxable

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷⁷ Ellis and Evans, 759. Ellis and Evans compiled the list from various land records. The two names in my assessment of the list that do not reflect Scotch-Irish heritage are "Blazer," which is most likely German, and "Le Tort," which is French. Jacques (James) Le Tort, a French Huguenot, was one of the first European Indian traders in Pennsylvania.

population.⁷⁸ Nineteenth-century biographers Ellis and Evans declared in their description of Donegal's early inhabitants, "They [Scotch-Irish] were a peculiar people,"⁷⁹ a remark that speaks to the conspicuous Scotch-Irish character that marked Donegal's social and physical landscape. In particular, the area's architecture, religious practices, and social customs show how these settlers meshed their ethnic heritage with Anglo-American ideals of freedom and opportunity. The settlers named the site after County Donegal, their ancestral homeland in Northern Ireland. They organized a Presbyterian Church and built a log meeting house in the early 1700s—a significant aspect of the community's ability to sustain formal and informal cultural control of the community. (A later section of this chapter explores the church's role in Revolutionary and early national Donegal). In addition to a log meeting house, a Presbyterian school house was among the first institutional structures in the township, indicating the intertwining of religion and education in the community's social order.

Although an agricultural "country" community, Donegal's residents kept transatlantic commercial ties. Historians, including Judith Ridner and Diane Wenger, have shown how trading networks linked interior towns to coastal market centers and other areas of the mid-Atlantic region. Donegal's two to three river ferries, for example, operated into the early national period, illustrating its role as an exchange hub. In addition, farmers who had been former Indian traders and merchants, including James Patterson, John Galbraith, and Alexander Lowry,

⁷⁸ I reached this conclusion by analyzing surnames on the 1782 tax assessment list for Donegal Township. Of the ninety surnames listed, twenty-eight surnames appear to be German, including Albright, Blazer, Bowman, Brenner, Brubaker, Drevenstadt, Graybill, Hollinger, Mumma, Musser, Stauffer, Witmer, Longenecker, and Martin. One "Negro" with the name "Boggs" is cited; and one name "Clapper," is most likely English.

⁷⁹ Ellis and Evans, 757.

comprised Donegal's most prominent citizens in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁸⁰ By the 1780s, numerous large Scotch-Irish farmsteads of over one hundred acres of land and several stone mills dotted the rural landscape.⁸¹ Farming on this scale suggests grain production and manufacture of flour products for outside markets not just for community consumption. An expanded grain market, driven by a rising demand for foodstuffs in Europe and the West Indies, occurred in the early national period. Many Pennsylvania merchants and farmers who had been involved in the now defunct fur trade, Ridner explains, found new economic opportunities in exporting grain.⁸² It is reasonable to assert that Donegal's farmers likewise grew wheat and other crops to meet this overseas demand.

Social Status, Farms, and Refinement in Donegal

When Sally traveled further into Pennsylvania's interior, she assessed the physical landscape against her Donegal community standards. In Franklin County on October 10, 1800, for instance, she wrote, "I think the Land is poor, and the generality of the Houses are but Huts. ... We are drawing near the frontiers of Refinement."⁸³ The small one to two room log cabins in which many backcountry residents lived indicated people who were not members of "the better

⁸⁰ Ibid., 759-760. The 1782 tax assessment for Donegal Township cites Richard Keys and Christian Vinegar as ferry owners.

⁸¹ The 1782 Tax Assessment for Donegal Township, for example, cites fifty-two landowners, (most with Scotch-Irish surnames) with at least one hundred acres of land or more.

⁸² Ridner, 161.

⁸³ SAH, October, 10, 1800, 182.

sort,” as Sally noted in her narrative.⁸⁴ According to Catherine Kelly, taste and refinement, factors closely related to gentility and polite society, were grounded in the material world for early national Americans.⁸⁵ In Sally’s hometown, even the middling and lower-classes lived in larger log houses than those found in the backcountry. In 1798, for example, the average middling class house in Donegal was a one-story log building between 400 and 600 square feet, assessed at approximately \$354.00, more than double the typical size of frontier log homes.⁸⁶

The more prosperous and influential members of Donegal Township, including Brice Clark, were farmers with large landholdings. They demonstrated their upper-class status in part with larger houses and specialized outbuildings. The most affluent farmers’ houses were made of stone, brick, or a combination of stone and brick. They also were valued much more highly. John Whitehill, for example, the Clarks’ closest neighbor and friend, lived in a two-story stone house of 1120 square feet valued at \$1100.00. Whitehill also owned several outbuildings, including a stone barn, a log still house, and a stone kitchen. Similarly, Brice Clark owned a 1008 square foot home valued at \$700.00 and a large barn and kitchen on 213 acres assessed at \$5112.⁸⁷ As Cary Carson notes, the specialized outbuildings suggest separate work and

⁸⁴ SAH, October 9, 1800, 181.

⁸⁵ Kelly, 6.

⁸⁶ Ridner, 55. This size and value of Donegal’s log houses were nearly double the average log house found in the backcountry which was typically 101 to 200 sq. feet.

⁸⁷ 1798 Lancaster County tax assessment.

socializing spaces, thus illustrating a shift towards fashionable living and genteel behavior among Donegal's inhabitants.⁸⁸

Donegal Presbyterian Church

The township's Presbyterian Church, organized in 1732, was an important cultural facet of Sally's Donegal life. Situated near a spring, the first meeting house was a log structure. A second church building made of stone and covered with stucco was constructed not long after the first one in 1732 and continues to be used by today's congregants (fig. 7). The one and half story building, according to the National Register of Historic Places, features "a structural form and gambrel roof common to buildings in Irish settlements." Furthermore, the building's layout and size is comparable to its parent church built in 1674 in County Donegal, Ireland, illustrating the early settlers' ties to their religious and cultural heritage.⁸⁹ The interior consists of one rectangular room, which during Sally's time, was remodeled to include additional doorways and windows cut into each end opposite the aisle running in front of the pulpit.⁹⁰

The Presbyterian Church and its cemetery point to Donegal's history during the Revolutionary War period. When Sally wandered past the cemetery's stone wall and entered the churchyard in 1800, more than thirty Donegal families were already buried there; their lives emblemized by standing and flat stone tablets dotting the yard in neat rows. Over thirty of those

⁸⁸ Carson, 559.

⁸⁹ National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Services, PHMC, Harrisburg, PA, January 17, 1980.

⁹⁰ Ellis and Evans, 774.



Photo by JOHN K. MILLER, Maytown.

DONEGAL CHURCH.

Figure 7. John K. Miller photograph of Donegal Presbyterian Church, Donegal Township, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Abt. 1902.

Source: J.L. Ziegler, *An Authentic History of Donegal Presbyterian Church Located in East Donegal Township, Lancaster Co., Pa.* (Philadelphia: F. McManus, Jr., & Co., 1902).

stones marked Revolutionary War soldiers, including Colonel Bartram Galbraith, Colonel James Patterson, and Colonel Alexander Lowry, visible reminders of the intersecting links between Donegal's religious and cultural heritage and traditional American values of liberty and independence. Like other immigrants, these Scotch-Irish Presbyterians came to Pennsylvania in search of better economic opportunities. Some also came to escape British religious and political suppression. Early on, these settlers identified themselves as "people from a state of vassalage," as one later nineteenth-century historian put it, who survived the rigors of the frontier to carve out better lives for themselves and their families.⁹¹ As such, the Donegal community, including the Presbyterian Church, actively participated on the patriot side during the war for independence.⁹²

The church subsequently became a key site for military and political concerns during the Revolution, symbolized by the large white oak tree that had stood guard just inside the cemetery's stone wall. In 1777, an army courier dispatched by General Washington interrupted church services to announce British General Howe's imminent invasion of Pennsylvania and George Washington's retreat to nearby Brandywine. The messenger found Colonel Alexander Lowry in the congregation and called for him to muster his militia and assist George Washington. According to tradition, the congregation and its newly-installed Scottish minister, Colin McFarquhar, immediately adjourned and formed a circle around the old oak tree in the yard. They held hands and pledged allegiance to the patriot cause.⁹³ The tree came to be called

⁹¹ Ibid., 758.

⁹² National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, 2.

⁹³ Ziegler, 32. Samuel Hazard, ed. *The Register of Pennsylvania*, vol. 3 (Philadelphia: W.F. Geddes, 1829), 296. There appears to be a discrepancy in the historical records as to when

“The Witness Tree.”⁹⁴ When Sally arrived in Donegal in 1783, she was still a young girl. The war had ended, but the Church with its giant oak tree continued to shape the values and ideals of its early national congregants.

Slavery in Donegal Township

Some early national Pennsylvanians, including Sally’s family, did own slaves. And, it seems probable that the unnamed traveling companions (the “young Woman” and “young Man who belonged to us”) Sally referred to in her travel narrative were enslaved African Americans.⁹⁵ Although Pennsylvania passed the Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery in 1780, the legislation continued to protect the current slaveholders and did not free slaves born before 1780. Most Pennsylvania slave owners in rural counties were innkeepers, ironmasters, and wealthier

this event took place. Ziegler cites *Transactions of the Scotch-Irish Congress* in giving a date of June 1777; whereas, a commemorative plaque at the site provides a date of September 1777. The June date corresponds more readily to the historical circumstances and seems to be supported by a record in *Hazard’s Register of Pennsylvania* (1829) in which a letter dated June 16, 1777 from John Lacey to Colonel Kirkbride on the subject discusses orders that the whole Pennsylvania militia be “turned out” and different battalion commanders be “called upon” to march with their soldiers.

⁹⁴ “Our History,” Donegal Presbyterian Church Brochure, n.d. The Witness Tree was already over one hundred years old when Sally worshipped at Donegal Presbyterian. It grew for nearly three centuries, but unfortunately succumbed to disease and was cut down in 1991. A plaque where the tree once stood describes its importance and the events of 1777.

⁹⁵ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178; SAH, October 23, 1800, 195. Sally tells her readers that her party consisted of “ten persons...five of whom are Children.” These persons included: Sally, her sister Rebekah, her sister’s husband Joseph Barton, and her sister’s three daughters. This tally leaves four unaccounted for persons. Later in the narrative, she mentions the presence of a young woman and man. It seems likely that the young woman and young man were slaves and related, possibly mother and son. The other two children also may have been the young woman’s children.

artisans and farmers like Brice Clark. In general, slaves in the northeast and mid-Atlantic regions were not valued for their agricultural labor. Rather, as Robert Taylor notes, slaves were prized for their domestic service, and slave ownership served as a marker for an elevated social status.⁹⁶ The 1790 census shows that there were at least 3707 slaves residing in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (or about 10% of the county's total population of 35,920) during Sally's young adulthood. Of this number, thirty-three slaves were reported to live in Donegal Township with Sally's step-father, Brice Clark, owning two slaves. By 1800, as gradual emancipation began to take effect, the number of enslaved African Americans reported in Lancaster County dropped to 1706 persons. In Donegal (which in 1800 included part of Elizabethtown), the 1800 census records show 53 slaves residing in the township. Of this number, Brice Clark still owned two slaves, most likely the same enslaved persons from the 1790 census.

Court documents further prove the existence of enslaved African Americans held by members of Sally's family. As noted in the section on Sally's parents, Margaret and Robert, tax lists show that at least one slave was present in the household. An indenture dated November 11, 1769 between Kirk Ellis of Cecil County and Robert Anderson of Lancaster County documents the sale of "a negro girl called Eve, about seven years old" to Sally's father as "real property," supporting the previously discussed presence of a slave woman in the Anderson family during the late eighteenth century.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Taylor, 299.

⁹⁷Martha Bladen Clark, "Lancaster's Relation to Slavery," in *Papers Read Before the Lancaster County Historical Society* (Lancaster: 1911), 43.

When Robert Anderson died and Margaret remarried, the ownership of Eve passed to Brice Clark, as evidenced by Lancaster County's slave returns. After the passage of Pennsylvania's 1780 gradual emancipation act, slave owners were required to file returns documenting slaves they owned and to report the births of any children born after the law's passage, as such persons would be legally freed at the age of twenty-eight. Brice Clark filed the following return in order to comply with these regulations on October 10, 1780: "Brice Clark, farmer, in Leacock Township and Lancaster County, both a negro woman named Eve aged eighteen years, also a Negro boy named Jack aged eight years, both slaves for life."⁹⁸ When Eve later gave birth to children, Brice Clark also made Lancaster County slave returns. These records reveal the names of the enslaved African Americans recorded in the census records: On March 27, 1789, Brice gave record to the birth of Eve's daughter, an eight-year-old "mulatto girl" named "Venus," born in February of 1781 (see fig. 8 for Clark's slave return).⁹⁹ The mulatto designation suggests that Venus was of mixed race and had a white father.¹⁰⁰ Because

⁹⁸ Ibid., 44.

⁹⁹ Lancaster County Clerk of Courts, *Lancaster County Returns of Negro and Mulatto Children Born after the Year 1780*, PHMC, Pennsylvania State Archives, RG-47, 1789, digital image, accessed September 5, 2016, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r47-SlaveRecords/r47-SlaveRecords-Lancaster/r47-SlaveRecords-LancasterReturns.htm>.

¹⁰⁰ Mulatto was both a legal and census designation for a child with one white parent and one black (or sometimes American Indian) parent.

Brice Clark of Douglas Township
 Lancaster County Yeoman, returns a
 Mulatto Girl to be registered, named
 Venus aged Eight years February
 last being Born in February 1781. Her
 Mothers name is Eve and is Registered
 according to Law Given under my hand
 this 27th day of March Month. 1789

Brice Clark

Brice Clark was affirmed
 to the truth of the above return
 March 27th 1789 Cor. J. om
 John Hubley

Figure 8. Brice Clark Slave Return. 1789.

Source: Returns of Negro and Mulatto Children Born After the Year 1780, 1788-1793, PHMC, RG-47, Lancaster County Clerk of Courts.

children inherited their enslaved status from their mothers, Venus was determined to be a slave (despite having a white father).¹⁰¹ Clark filed a later return recording the birth of Eve's son, "Nat," on December 16, 1789.¹⁰²

Maytown

Maytown was the most significant town in Donegal Township in 1800. Located on what was called Old Peter's Road, an early eighteenth-century Indian trading path, Maytown is a 150-acre tract of land in the eastern section (now called East Donegal) of the township, about two miles from the Susquehanna River. Old Peter's Road, also known as the "Great Road," ran from Lancaster to Harris's Ferry, and Maytown is situated where the road branched out southward to the Susquehanna River at what was then Vinegar's Ferry. From there, the road would take travelers to the backcountry regions of York and Dauphin Counties.¹⁰³ Maytown's location within Donegal Township and its proximity to the Susquehanna River, a distance of about two miles, can be seen in figure 9. Jacob Downer, a German Mennonite (an Anabaptist group) land

¹⁰¹ See Sharon Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996) for examinations of race construction in early America. We do not know the identity of Venus' father. But, as historians have shown, miscegenation was common. Furthermore, enslaved women were vulnerable to rape and sexual coercion by white male slave owners and other white men.

¹⁰² Clark, 44.

¹⁰³ Rev. W.J. Lowe, "Donegal Reformed Church at Milton Grove, Maytown Reformed Church at Maytown," *Lancaster County Historical Society* 22 (1918): 35-50.

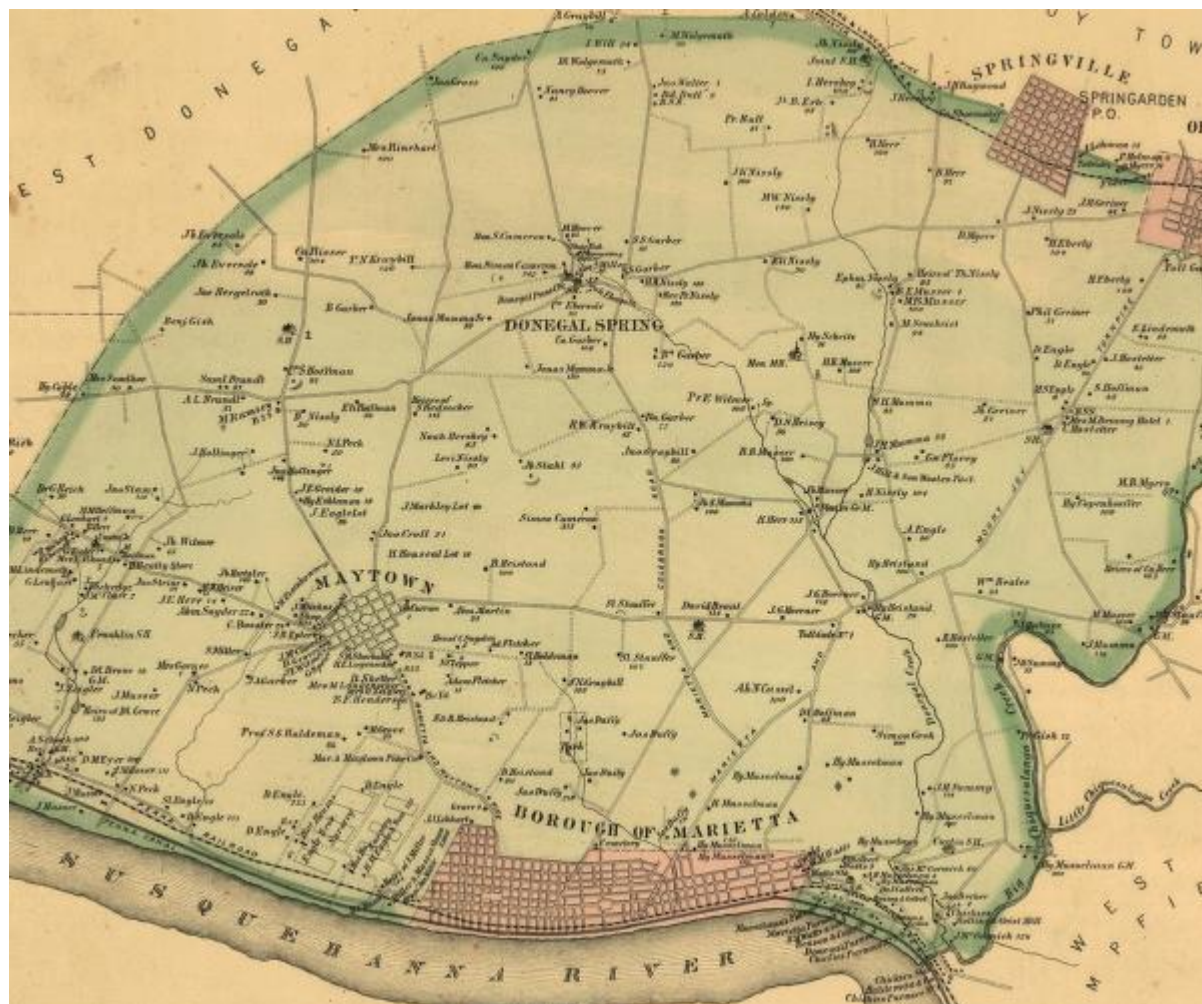


Figure 9. Map of East Donegal Township. 1875.

This map illustrates Maytown's location within [East] Donegal Township and its close proximity to the Susquehanna River. It also strikingly highlights Maytown's ordered grid pattern within the largely rural area. *Source:* Everts & Stewart, 1875 Combination Atlas, Map of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

speculator, purchased the land from the Scotch-Irish Indian trader Lazarus Lowry, and laid out the town in 1760. Downer, along with his wife Elizabeth, envisioned a utopian-like community, situated as a gateway to the West, whereby German, English, and Scotch-Irish immigrants would live and work together supplying the needs of the many travelers passing through on their way to the backcountry.¹⁰⁴

Downer devised a rectangular plan with a grid pattern for his town. This type of design served to impose order on the backcountry and promote settlement (see fig. 9). Judith Ridner explains how the grid layout utilized by many colonial town makers illustrates both a visible and ideological undertaking linked to frontier expansion. Firstly, it created an organized “landscape of roads, buildings, and structured spaces” that reflected the “landscape of values, attitudes, and behaviors.” Such a systematic plan, in other words, suggests the desire of colonial officials and elites to maintain traditional authority over the townspeople. Secondly, the grid survey plan was a time-honored urban design “closely associated” with European and British colonialism. As such, Ridner notes, “a host” of interior towns in the mid-Atlantic, North Carolina, and Tennessee regions adopted similar grid plans.¹⁰⁵ Downer’s rectangular plan, therefore, was not exceptional nor particularly unique.

¹⁰⁴ Ellis and Evans, 778-779; Robert M. Lescalette, “An Initial History of the Maytown Museum House,” Maytown Historical Society, [Maytownhistory.org](http://www.maytownhistory.org), http://www.maytownhistory.org/museum_history.phtml (accessed December 30, 2013); Of particular note, by 1760, the earlier American Indian inhabitants in the area were gone—pushed out in part by growing white European settlement, as well as disease and violence with other Indian groups.

¹⁰⁵ Ridner, 33, 35.

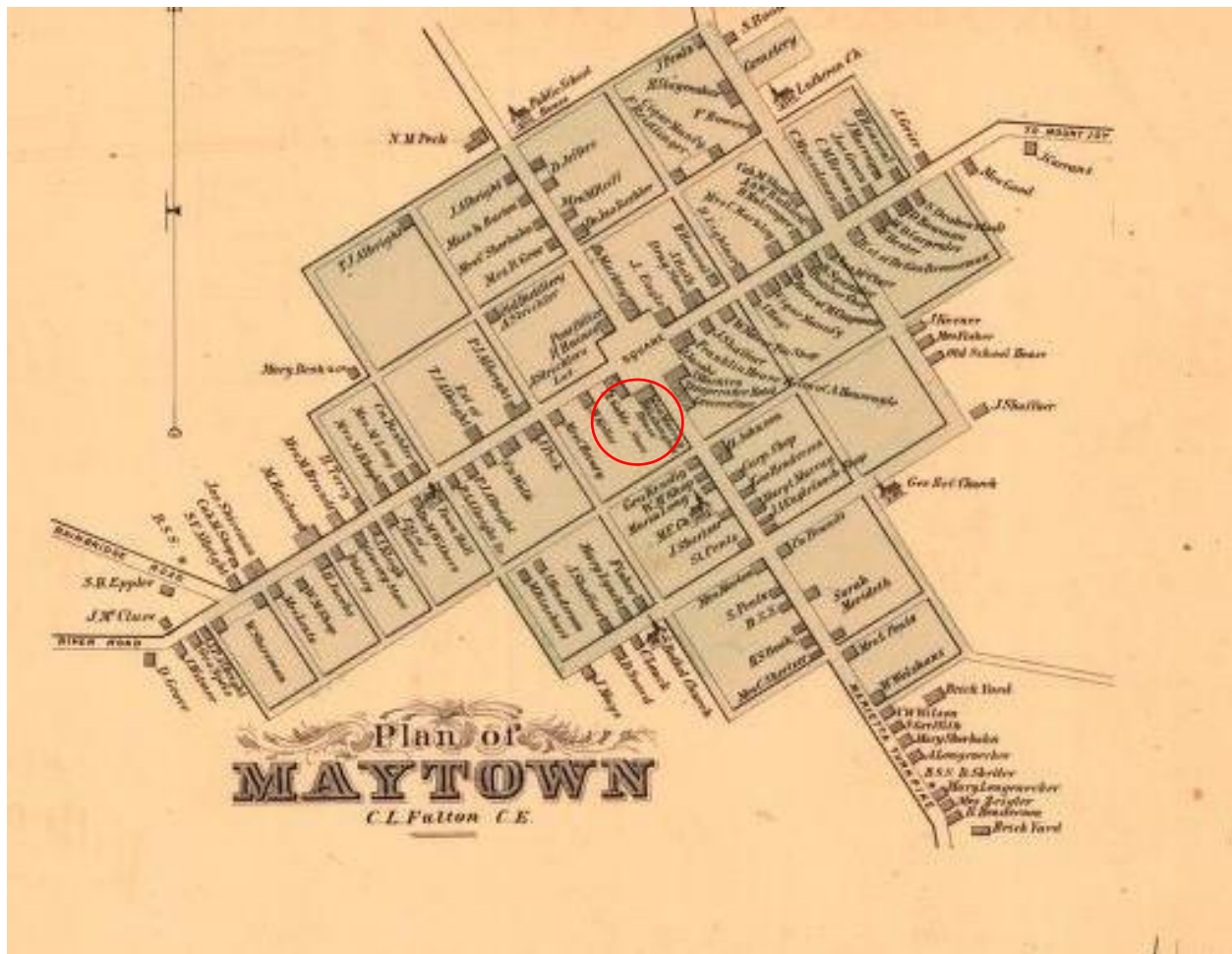


Figure 10. Plan of Maytown. 1875.

This map illustrates the grid layout of Maytown. Sally's home was located in the first block of the southwest corner of the square (see circle). *Source:* Combination Atlas, Map of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania by Everts & Stewert, 1875.

Rather, Maytown's ordered grid plan speaks to colonial frontier expansion. Rectangular lots, according to Ridner, were easily divided into smaller parcels, allowing for quicker sales and accommodation of future growth. A look at Downer's design exemplifies these goals. Two main streets, crossing at right angles, intersected at a center square that was allocated for a market house. Local historian, Reverend Robert Lescalette notes, the town consisted of sixteen blocks, measuring 250 by 250 feet, arranged in four tiers with each block subdivided into four lots. This division allowed just enough space for settlers to build a moderately-sized dwelling house, construct a small barn or stable for livestock and horses, and develop a garden to feed themselves. Lescalette further explains how all of the original lots, except for a few lots fronting the town square, measured 62 ½' by 250.' They were numbered sequentially beginning with lot #1, which was located on the southwest corner of the square, moving to lot #8 on the south side of West High Street, and continuing around the entire grid.¹⁰⁶

Downer quickly sold his lots, mostly to German and Scotch-Irish settlers. It was not long before row houses lined the streets. In 1782, Maytown had forty-two houses. The town's residents included two tailors, three weavers, one gunsmith, one blacksmith, one wheelwright, one potter, one tavern keeper, and one carpenter.¹⁰⁷ By 1800, the population of Maytown had grown to 400 inhabitants.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Lescalette, "An Initial History."

¹⁰⁷ 1782 Tax list reprinted in William Henry Egle, ed. *Proprietary and State Tax Lists of the County of Lancaster for the Years 1771-1773, 1779, and 1782* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer of Pa., 1898), 861. Enoch Hastings (Sally's husband) was the carpenter named in the 1782 tax list.

¹⁰⁸ 1800 U.S. Census, Donegal Township, Maytown, Pennsylvania, population schedule, p.12-15; digital images, Ancestry.com, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi->

Furthermore, Downer's grid plan reveals the town's intended role as a site of commercial exchange. By placing a market house in the center of the town square, he followed a pattern used by other ambitious Pennsylvania German town makers who hoped to make their planned communities service centers for the region. Diane Wenger, for example, notes that Schaefferstown, a village located about forty miles northeast of Maytown and founded in 1757, similarly arranged for a public market house to be located on the town square. As Wenger argues, the market house building and its central location emblemize the community's market orientation.¹⁰⁹ For Maytown, the addition of taverns at both the southwest and northwest corners of the square shortly after the town's founding further testifies to this goal.¹¹⁰

Sally Anderson Hastings' Maytown House

Sally's husband, Enoch Hastings (1728-1812), was one of the first lot holders in Maytown.¹¹¹

bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7590&h=412823&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043840470&usePUB=true

¹⁰⁹ Diane E. Wenger, *A Country Storekeeper in Pennsylvania: Creating Economic Networks in Early Pennsylvania* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2012), 16-17.

¹¹⁰ Ellis and Evans, 780-782.

¹¹¹ Records indicating Enoch Hastings' presence in Maytown in the 1770s include the 1779 Pennsylvania Septennial Census, Donegal, Lancaster County, "Knock Hastings," digital image, Ancestry.com, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2702&h=709182&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043840470&usePUB=true>; and Pennsylvania Oyer and Terminer Court Papers, Pennsylvania State Archives, Lancaster County, 1772; digital image, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2385&h=7516&ssrc=pt&tid=59224661&pid=32043840470&usePUB=true>

By November, 1771, he owned High Street lots #2 and #3.¹¹² By 1785, Enoch, who was a carpenter and shingle maker, had built a one-story log home and covered it with hand-hewn clapboards measuring 40' in length by 20' in depth on High Street lot #3.¹¹³ This house was most likely the home of Sally Hastings and her children when she lived with Enoch from at least 1789 to 1795. The original log structure of the house can be seen in figure 11.

¹¹² Lescallete, "An Initial History." A Lancaster County deed recorded November 4, 1771 shows that Enoch purchased High Street lot #2, and that he already owned High Street lot #3. The house on High Street, lot #3, is currently the site of the Maytown Historical Society. Lancaster County Courthouse Archives, *Lancaster County Deed Book W*, vol. 5, Lancaster Pa., p. 16.

¹¹³ Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration, 1768-1801, PHMC, Records of the Office of the Comptroller General, RG-4, Tax and Exoneration Lists, 1762-1794, Microfilm roll 329; Ellis and Evans, 782; Lescallete, "An Initial History." In 1785, Enoch Hastings owned 2 lots in Maytown with 1 house and 1 cow.



Figure 11. Photograph of Sally and Enoch Hastings' Maytown home.

This building currently houses the Maytown Historical Society.

Sally Anderson's Maytown Marriage

How did Sally meet her husband, Enoch Hastings? What circumstances led a fifteen-year-old Sally to marry a man four times her age? As a woman with strong religious convictions, why did she choose someone outside the Presbyterian faith? We do not know the answers to these questions. Sally probably first encountered Enoch Hastings after 1785, when he appears to have settled permanently in Maytown. However, by piecing together parts of Enoch Hastings' history before Maytown, we can make some reasonable assumptions about the couple's relationship.

Enoch Hastings seems to have had an interesting and checkered past. Born in 1728 in Salisbury Township, Lancaster County, he was the second son of Quakers Thomas and Mary Hastings.¹¹⁴ Enoch's first wife was Sarah Richards.¹¹⁵ Their known children include: one daughter, Patience (b. 1761), and three sons, Howell (born bef. 1769), William (b. 1769), and John (b. 1773).¹¹⁶ The Friends' Monthly Meeting Minutes from Sadsbury in Lancaster County suggest that Enoch's first marriage also was turbulent. Throughout the course of 1767, for example, fellow church members gave testimony regarding marital misconduct on the part of Enoch. They stated that he "went outside his marriage," an accusation that Enoch would not

¹¹⁴ George E. Hastings, 9. Enoch's siblings were Patience, Job, Sarah, Thomas, John, and Lydia.

¹¹⁵ F. Edward Wright, *Pennsylvania Church Records of the 18th Century*, Vol. III (Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1994-1996), 107. The marriage of Enoch Hastings and Sarah Richards dated November 27, 1766 is recorded in the records of Lancaster's St. James Episcopal Church.

¹¹⁶ Lescallete, "An Initial History."

repudiate or condemn, according to the witnesses. Church members made several attempts to “restore” Enoch to the church by having him repent and refrain from the misconduct; however, they were not successful. The Quakers eventually disowned Enoch.¹¹⁷ We do not know whether Enoch’s first marriage ended by divorce or the death of Sarah Richards. It is also possible that Enoch simply abandoned Sarah, or she abandoned him.

Enoch Hastings also served as a militia officer during the Revolutionary War. When Sally was only three years old, a forty-nine-year old Enoch took the patriot oath of allegiance in Donegal Township on November 10, 1777. A month later, he enlisted in Salisbury Township as a private in the Lancaster County militia. From 1780-83, he served as captain of the 2nd Company of the First Battalion in Salisbury Township.¹¹⁸

When Enoch settled in Maytown after the war, he possessed several attributes that a young woman would have looked for in a husband at that time. In 1786, Enoch came into a sizable inheritance. When John Hastings, Enoch’s grandfather died, he left 360 acres of farmland in Salisbury Township. As both Enoch’s father and older brother had died earlier, Enoch became the executor and benefactor of the estate and promptly sold the land for 2,603 pounds.¹¹⁹ In addition, he was a skilled carpenter who owned property, a house, livestock,

¹¹⁷ Swarthmore College; Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; Sadsbury Men's Minutes, 1737-1783; Collection: Quaker Meeting Records; Call Number: MR Ph: 504; multiple digital images, *Ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016. Hastings’ refusal to repent and to keep his marriage vows, as well as his subsequent military service, would have gotten him disowned from the Quaker Church.

¹¹⁸ George Hastings, 10; Thomas Lynch Montgomery, ed. *Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series*, Vol. VII (Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1906), 29, 35, 42, 77-78.

¹¹⁹ Lescallete, “An Initial History.” Lancaster County Courthouse Archives, Deed Book EE, p. 508ff.

horses, and even had a few servants. When Sally married the Revolutionary War veteran on February 24, 1789, it had only been five years since the war had ended. We can surmise that Enoch's past service as a former militia officer during the Revolution gave him an elevated status in a community that valued patriotic service like Donegal. Interestingly, there is no evidence that Enoch joined the Presbyterian Church, and he is buried in Maytown Union cemetery, also known as St. John's Lutheran Church cemetery.¹²⁰

Over the course of the next five years, Enoch and Sally Hastings had three children, two daughters and a son. Their children were: Margaret (b.1791), Enoch (b.1793), and Sarah (b.1795). Sally did not take her children with when she made her first journey to Washington County in 1800. We can infer from letters Sally wrote while living in Washington that her children remained in the care of Margaret and Brice Clark. Her oldest daughter, Margaret, died sometime before her return to Lancaster in 1805. When Sally went back to Washington County in 1808, she took her son Enoch and daughter Sarah with her. Enoch Jr. married Mary Golden Henderson and settled in Amwell Township, Washington County. They had several children, including Mary, Nancy Jane, Sarah, Henderson, Samuel, John, and William. Enoch, Jr. died of consumption in December 1829.¹²¹ Sally's daughter, Sarah, also married and settled in Amwell,

¹²⁰ Enoch Hastings tombstone inscription, Maytown Union Cemetery, Maytown, Pa., *findagrave.com*, accessed December 29, 2016, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=hastings&GSfn=enoch&GSbyrel=all&GSdyrel=all&GSob=n&GRid=166338987&df=all&>.

¹²¹ Enoch Hastings Jr.'s obituary appeared in the December 1829 issue of the *Washington Review and Examiner*, Washington, Pa.

Washington County. Sarah and her husband, James Hamilton Chambers, had a son, George. Sarah died in 1867.¹²²

We do not know why Sally separated from her husband. We can conclude from her travel narrative that she was a spirited and strong-willed woman. But it cannot be determined with any certainty whether it was her or her husband's behavior (or some other reason) that resulted in the unraveling of the marriage. The trouble alluded to in the Quaker minutes regarding Enoch's first marriage suggest patterns of behavior that would not be conducive to marital stability. Sally intimates in her poetry that she may have been abandoned, as her children were "Orphans" and "fatherless indeed."¹²³ But, there are no court or other written records documenting this logical assumption.¹²⁴

We do know, however, that Sally wanted a legal divorce from her husband. In a letter dated June 29, 1808, Sally pleaded with her family to take steps in Lancaster to petition the state legislature for a divorce on her behalf: "Why must I trail a lengthening chain of misery through life on account of an unhappy transaction which is beyond the power of human skill to amend and from which the law will fully extricate me?" Divorce in the nineteenth century may not have been common, but it was one of the few legal options married women could pursue.

¹²² *Commemorative Biographical Record of Washington County, Pennsylvania*, Chicago, J. H. Beers & Co., 1893, p. 196.

¹²³ SAH, "A Private Prayer," 93.

¹²⁴ The 1785 Pennsylvania Divorce Law allowed men and women to petition for a divorce on the grounds of cruelty, abandonment, and adultery. There were two types of divorce: A separation from "Bed and Board" divorce allowed a woman to retain dower rights and petition for alimony. But, she could not remarry. An annulment would be a complete dissolution of the marriage and would allow for remarriage.

Moreover, Pennsylvania at this time had one of the more lenient divorce laws in the nation. While there was no such thing as a “no fault” divorce, Sally could have received a legal dissolution by proving cruel treatment, bigamy, adultery, or abandonment. Despite her request, no legal or anecdotal evidence exists to show whether or not Sally ever received a legal divorce.¹²⁵

Regardless, Sally’s actions testify to how she pushed the boundaries of her genteel circles. A comment written to her mother from Washington County is telling, “I believe it is generally understood here I have obtained a divorce from that connection [her marriage to Enoch Hastings] but some I am told assert that I am not entitled to that privilege on account of my own conduct.”¹²⁶ As a traveler, writer, and separated woman, Sally moved beyond her expected roles of wife and mother. A divorce may have damaged further her already fragile reputation. Yet, Sally’s desire to legally end her marriage is another indication that she looked for alternatives to prescribed republican womanhood.

¹²⁵ SAH to Friends, June 29, 1808, in George E. Hastings, 67. Family history states that her step-father Brice Clark adamantly opposed divorce and would not pursue legal action in Lancaster on her behalf. For studies regarding marriage and divorce in the Revolutionary and early national periods see Mary Beth Sievens, *Stray Wives: Marital Conflict in Early National New England* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Susan Klepp, *Revolutionary Conceptions: Women, Fertility, and Family Limitation in America, 1760-1820* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2009); and Karin Wulf, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

¹²⁶ SAH to Friends, June 29, 1808, in George E. Hastings, 66-67.

Sally Anderson Hastings' Cultural World

Religion

An important element of Sally's life was the Presbyterian Church. Her writings (both her poetry and travel narrative) reveal her to be an excellent student of the Bible. She attended Presbyterian meetings in both Lancaster and Washington Counties, as she told her mother (Margaret Clark) in an 1801 letter written from Cross Creek, "I go very little abroad only to Meeting. There I attend regularly as the Church Doors are open."¹²⁷ She identified as a "Predestinarian," or a Calvinist Protestant. As such, she had a belief in an individual's ability to read and interpret biblical scriptures and to have a personal relationship with God.

Sally participated in the religious revivalism that swept the nation in the early nineteenth century. This movement, known as the Second Great Awakening, drew upon Post-millennialism, or the belief that the "Second Coming of Christ" will occur after the "millennium," a golden age of Christian progress and prosperity. According to David Walker Howe, early national Post-millennialists blended theories of American exceptionalism and preached that the United States would be the world-site of the millennium. As a result, Presbyterians, and other groups such as Methodists and Baptists, engaged in missionary work seeking to convert "sinners" in the nation's frontier and rural areas.¹²⁸ Large outdoor camp

¹²⁷ SAH to Margaret Clark, August 14, 1801, in George E. Hastings, 39.

¹²⁸ David Walker Howe, *What God Hath Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 283-284.

meetings and tent revivals, led by fiery, charismatic itinerant and frontier ministers, popped up in many places in the backcountry. Sally went to these events while in the West, as her sister Rebekah noted in an 1801 letter to their mother, “Josy [Rebekah’s husband Joseph Barton] and Sally have gone to Buffalo Village to attend an open air communion service.” In the same letter, Rebekah further commented on the “crowded place,” at another meeting the family went to in the town of Raccoon. She pointed out the religious fervor and emotional dancing, singing, and shouting that often characterized the camp meetings. She wrote, “Sally says it puts her in mind of the Judgement. But I confess it brings the idea of bees swarming into my mind,”¹²⁹ revealing the popularity of the revivals as social events that were often attended by hundreds, and sometimes thousands of people.

As an intelligent woman with a philosophical mind, Sally formed close relationships with the Presbyterian ministers in her life. In particular, she admired Washington County’s popular pastor, the Reverend Thomas Marquis (1753-1827). Sally’s poem, “The Recollection,” written at Donegal on June 9, 1805, is a tender and nostalgic ode to her bond with the frontier minister. She referred to Marquis as the “Friend of my soul” and remarks upon “the hours” she spent with him.¹³⁰ Marquis, born near Winchester, Virginia, led the churches at Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo. He enjoyed leading tent revivals and was noted for his powerful speaking abilities.¹³¹ Sally spoke to this ability in a letter to her mother praising Marquis as an “Eloquent Orator” and

¹²⁹ Rebekah Barton to Margaret Clark, 1801, in George E. Hastings, 35.

¹³⁰ SAH, “The Recollection,” 109-111.

¹³¹ Joseph Smith, *Old Redstone, or Historical Sketches of Western Presbyterianism* (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1854), 432-434.

“the Dreadfulest Thunderer” who had a “Sound Devine.” She wrote, “To hear him is harmony, though he often gives us the slash of the law in all its severity. He has before now fairly made me jump off my seat with terror and slapping the pulpit. If he would only quit that he would be the sweetest man in the world.” She then revealed her affection for the fiery preacher by stating, “Nothing seems more at variance than his preaching and his Countenance, one is all Terror tother [sic] all sweetness and Mild persuasion. Scold as he may I will love him. Nay I cannot help it, he was formed to be loved.”¹³²

Sally appreciated ministers who were powerful and accomplished speakers, as well as empathetic listeners and teachers. She also established a friendship with Donegal’s minister, the Reverend Colin McFarquhar (abt. 1729-1822). As noted earlier, McFarquhar, a Maytown resident, served Donegal’s church during the Revolutionary period and remained in that position until 1805. A native of Scotland, McFarquhar, who received an education from Edinburgh University, was known to be a “fine scholar.” During his thirty years as a pastor, he conducted a classical school at Lancaster for young men, and also served on an educational committee at Lancaster’s Franklin Academy (now Franklin and Marshall College). Like Marquis, McFarquhar was charismatic and popular.¹³³ As late nineteenth-century historian Samuel Evans noted, “He was a man of wonderful energy and powerful physique” who nurtured personal ties with his parishioners.¹³⁴ Sally affectionately addressed McFarquhar’s devotion to the ministry in

¹³² SAH to Margaret Clark, August 14, 1801, in George Hastings, 39.

¹³³ Ellis and Evans noted that Donegal’s congregation swelled to 500 persons during McFarquhar’s tenure, 775.

¹³⁴ Ellis and Evans, 775-776, 779.

her 1806 poem “The Rev. C. M’F—R.” by noting that he “dearly loves” his “little flock.” Sally also spoke to the minister’s gentle temperament, devotion to preaching, and his work as a teacher.¹³⁵ Sally’s relationship with McFarquhar, combined with his background, suggest that the minister played a pivotal role in Sally’s education and intellectual interests. The following sections look at the various ways in which Sally’s life reflects a fascinating in-between social and cultural status.

Literary Style

Sally’s travel narrative is written in a self-reflective voice. She creatively blends genres, such as poetry, fiction, and travelogue, to express her creativity and viewpoints on the people, places, and events she encountered. In this regard, her travel narrative gave her a framework to make sense of her journey, given the tensions between early national gender expectations and her roles as a traveler and a writer. Next, I briefly review several important facets of Sally’s literary style that will be explored in this dissertation’s remaining chapters.

Sally’s writing is unique because she stood at a cultural threshold. As this dissertation will demonstrate, she was influenced by both Enlightenment rationalism and Romantic sentimentalism. In this regard, she can be viewed through the lens of liminality, defined by anthropologist Victor Turner, as a “betwixt and between” phase, a marginal space wherein the participant is no longer residing in the old but not yet belonging to the new.¹³⁶ Writing at the

¹³⁵ SAH, “On the Rev. C. M’F—R, January 1, 1806, 44-46.

¹³⁶ Victor Turner, “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage,” in *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967).

turn of the century, Sally no longer lived in an eighteenth-century society, a world that had been imprinted by Scottish Common Sense reason and logic. But, she also did not wholly belong to the nineteenth-century Romantic world that stressed emotion and passion. She was “between” British social and cultural standards, and “betwixt” evolving American nationalist ideologies.

Sally’s writings blur the boundaries between two literary eras. For example, Sally adopted neoclassical forms for her poetry, including odes, elegies, sonnets, and eclogues (pastorals) that reflect eighteenth-century sensibilities. These poetic genres are emotionally restrained; they follow orderly patterns and conventions that some of us today may find, formulaic, stilted, and even unoriginal. However, as Carla Mulford explains, the constraints of neoclassical poetry required skill and rational thinking. Thus, writers displayed their good taste, learning, and intellectual acumen when they composed works in classical genres.¹³⁷ In this regard, Sally’s narrative contains many instances of poetry that emulate the era’s preeminent neoclassical poets, such as Edward Young, James Thomson, and Alexander Pope. In addition, her writing refers directly to these same writers, suggesting her desire to appear logical and reasoned.

On the other hand, her writing also demonstrates elements of Romanticism. Sally emphasizes emotion and her physical responses when she engages with nature and the backcountry wilderness in a way similar to Romantic writers, such as Edward Blake, William Wordsworth, and Lord Byron. Her narrative teems with examples of the pastoral and allusions

¹³⁷ See Carla Mulford, *Only for the Eye of a Friend: The Poems of Annis Boudinot Stockton* (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1995), for a discussion on early national women poets and the use of classical modes. Orderly, logical, and emotionally restrained characteristics of these poetic forms appealed to early national sensibilities of reason.

to the gothic. She also writes in the sublime, capturing the romantic's aesthetic appreciation of nature and the landscape as an emotionally overwhelming and ecstatic experience. At the same time, Sally imbued her sublime renderings with religious sentiments and allusions, romantically elevating the American wilderness landscape as a place of divine worship. In this way, as a genteel woman traveler, she wove together virtue, piety, and republican citizenship to create an urbane and cultured identity for herself.

Gentility and Sensibility

One of the most significant literary features of Sally's writing is her engagement with genteel sensibility. Early Republican sensibility, as a source for social bonds, combined both conservative and liberal dynamics. It grew out of eighteenth-century Enlightenment notions of sympathetic fellow feeling, or the ability to feel sympathy for other human beings. Adherents of sensibility, furthermore, believed that the sensible self was both made and expressed in social interactions by sensations of sympathy. This sympathy, a universal condition, connected human beings to each other and to the larger society—a concept that American revolutionaries believed would make a republican government possible and lead to the perfectibility of society. “Elaborated and displayed in taverns, salons, and literary clubs, as well as in domestic gatherings,” according to Mary Kelley, “sensibility was enacted in the company of others.” As such, sensibility gave evidence of a person's gentility, good taste, refinement, politeness, and sophistication.¹³⁸ Throughout her travel narrative, Sally looked for physical signs of gentility in

¹³⁸ Mary Kelley, “In the Need of Their Genius,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 28 (2008): 17-18.

people, places, and things. Likewise, she sought to maintain her own gentility, a performance that earned Sally and her companions the wrath of at least one irritated backcountry landlady who labeled them a “pack of saucy Gentry.”¹³⁹

Sally’s narrative shows how northern and mid-Atlantic sensibilities regarding polite society were transferred to frontier regions. As Imbarrato acknowledges, women travelers frequently and “aggressively imposed their own standards and sense of social order . . . rather than express a more inclusive attitude.”¹⁴⁰ Rigid self-presentation and adherence to prescribed manners in social situations indicated social status and morality. Likewise, the absence of these behavioral cues signaled coarseness. Genteel critics, therefore, frequently passed judgment on people’s appearances and mannerisms with snobbish, pompous, and insulting statements.¹⁴¹

These judgments seem awkward and impolite to modern-day Americans, but for sensible genteel Americans, such observational commentary was to be expected. Sally, for example, in a letter to her brother-in-law written after she settled in Washington County, harshly described backcountry Presbyterian minister Alexander Campbell’s wife, Margaret, as “a big unpolished very homely country girl. Bonus [Campbell’s newspaper pseudonym] looks ashamed of her, but she is rich, and a gilded dowdy.”¹⁴² Although Margaret Campbell, the daughter of an affluent

¹³⁹ SAH, October 23, 1800, 198.

¹⁴⁰ Imbarrato, 90.

¹⁴¹ Richard L. Bushman, *Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 56. Bushman provides several examples of “good-hearted” prominent women, including Nancy Shippen and Abigail Adams, who “seemed less than charitable” in their social commentary regarding other women.

¹⁴² SAH to Mr. [Samuel] Porter, n.d., in George E. Hastings, 87. Margaret Brown (1791-1827) was the daughter of a wealthy Virginia planter. She married Alexander Campbell in 1811.

Virginia planter, brought wealth to her marriage, her mannerisms revealed her to be an unrefined “Country girl.” Sally’s commentary is striking here because it reveals how post-Revolutionary gentility was a refashioning of the British model. Refinement, in Sally’s view, was not an innate characteristic; gentility was no longer restricted to those of gentle birth. Rather, it was a learned behavior that educated citizens cultivated, and as Catherine E. Kelly notes, like-minded individuals displayed and affirmed by reading, writing, and looking.¹⁴³

As a genteel traveler of the backcountry, Sally occupied a liminal space between refinement and rudeness. The Pennsylvania “forest” was a fluid society on a border between eastern standards of refinement and a presumed wilderness. Sally evaluated sociability according to a genteel vision of polite society that clashed with this more rustic culture. As the step-daughter of Brice Clark, one of Donegal Township’s leading citizens and a man with elite social status, she had been socialized into a world where refined standards of appearance, conduct, and mannerly behavior mattered.

Before her journey, Sally’s social interaction was most likely limited to her Lancaster circle of family and friends. Their entertainment would have centered upon genteel activities, such as engaging in intellectual conversation, reading aloud from letters and books, visiting each other’s houses, and attending formal parties. In a letter to her mother written shortly after settling in Cross Creek and hearing sermons by the charismatic “silver-tongued” frontier minister, Thomas Marquis, Sally gave a telling description regarding Donegal’s gentry:

You donnegall [sic] people would not bear him [the Reverend Thomas Marquis] at all if he would take a fit of sending you to the D—l [Devil] and that he would do without any Ceremony, for things you would scarce think you merited such rough treatment. Oh how he would handle your Dancing and singing your

¹⁴³ Catherine E. Kelly, 3.

Dressing and Gay Conversations your giddy round of Idle visits your taste and refinements, your preparations for Company, and all the etce ras [et ceteras] of your Fations [fashions].¹⁴⁴

Despite Sally's disapproving tone, her wry observations about social life in Lancaster County might have also described frontier entertainment: "Dancing and singing," "Gay Conversations," and "Idle visits"—these activities were the same. It was the more disorderly, sometimes riotous, culture that made the sociability different, as well as the mixing of genders and different social groups. The social and cultural contradictions Sally experienced as a traveler come to light through her work.

Sally's writing illustrates the complex gendering of sensibility in the Early Republic. Post-Revolutionary middle-class Americans imbued feminine sensibility with political and social meaning. Ideally, early national women should model polite, pious, virtuous conduct for others to emulate.¹⁴⁵ Bestowed with the mantle of moral superiority, genteel women travelers frequently imposed their behavioral standards and norms on frontier inhabitants, only to be rebuffed by the locals. Hence, in Sally's writings, we see her struggle with the tensions between ideal sociable behavior and actual experience.

"The Frontiers of Refinement"

The problem of the West is nothing less than the problem of American development. A glance at the map of the United States reveals the truth. To write of a "Western

¹⁴⁴ SAH to Margaret Clark, August 14, 1801, in George E. Hastings, 39.

¹⁴⁵ Mary Kelley, *Learning to Speak*, 17-18.

sectionalism," bounded on the east by the Alleghanies [sic], is, in itself, to proclaim the writer a provincial. What is the West? What has it been in American life?¹⁴⁶

~Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Problem of the West" (1896)

More than one hundred years after Frederick Jackson Turner first presented his frontier thesis, historians continue to grapple with the question—"What is the West?" The "frontier" has long been viewed as a defining feature in American history and identity. Yet, the very meaning and use of the word was and is a subject of intense debate and conflict among scholars. As such, I believe a brief discussion on the historiography of the definition of the "frontier" is warranted to explain my interpretative approach in delineating frontier spaces as both geographical and imaginative in this dissertation.

Turner asserted that American democracy was forged in the frontier. He argued that westward movement was more than physically going beyond the Alleghenies, a geographical boundary (or *place*) that limited Euro-American expansion before the Revolution. According to Turner, the American character developed in the movement of a cultural frontier line. This imaginary boundary separated the wilderness from civilization, in which each successive generation of pioneers returned to a primitive state (a *process*) whereby American individualism and inventiveness resulted. Turner's thesis, of course, left out the violence, the displacement of native peoples, and ignored the role of race, class, and gender in westward expansion. Yet, for decades, Turner's frontier thesis was the dominant lens through which historians interpreted the West.

¹⁴⁶ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Problem of the West," *The Atlantic Monthly* 68, no. 267 (September 1896): 289.

More recent scholars have discredited Turner's evolutionary model. In particular, the New Western historians have brought attention to groups of people that Turner and earlier historians of the West neglected, stereotyped, or simply left out of the story. Patricia Limerick Nelson and other revisionists underscored the frontier as a geographical place of conflict and conquest marked by fluid boundaries. Nelson further argued that historians should deemphasize the very word "frontier" to disengage it from ideas of process.¹⁴⁷

Although I agree with this regional approach and value the wider lens that these historians have used, I argue that we cannot unlink the "idea" of frontier from the place. In other words, literary evidence shows us that the "idea" of a distinctive American frontier as a social construction dates back to the age of discovery. Simply dispensing with the social constructions does not make them any less informative or valuable in understanding the past. As Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher point out, "Europeans were dreaming of unknown lands to the West" even before they first sailed to North America. Richard White agrees and writes that the West is "more than simple geography."¹⁴⁸ By disregarding, displacing, and debunking valued American mythology, White argues, we ignore the dynamic interactions and clashes that occurred between different cultures and peoples. We leave out the distinctive experience that many Americans faced in negotiating new ways of living and thinking. And, I believe, we overlook the power of imagination and how this imagination had an impact upon belief, behavior, and the practice of daily living.

¹⁴⁷ Patricia Limerick Nelson, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987), 26.

¹⁴⁸ Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretative History* (New Haven: Yale University, 2000), 1.

My interpretative approach, therefore, aligns more closely with Hine's and Faragher's "middle of the road" theories. They argue that a "place" versus "process" dichotomy obscures the multidimensional story that frontier history can reveal. In other words, place and process are not mutually exclusive. The frontier can be defined as both a region and as a concept, as suggested by Sally Hastings' words. For example, when her traveling party approached the mountains in Franklin County, she looked around and evaluated her surroundings. Drawing upon her own cultural assumptions and expectations, she wrote, "... the Land is poor, and the generality of the Houses are but Huts." From this "presumptive Evidence," she concluded, "... we are drawing near the frontiers of Refinement."¹⁴⁹ Not only does Sally's vocabulary ("poor," "Huts," "frontiers," and "refinement") reflect early American conceptions of the frontier as both a topographical and a cultural space, but it also points to conflicting values between outsiders and backcountry inhabitants.¹⁵⁰

Hence, I view Pennsylvania's backcountry as a site of dynamic cultural exchange. By 1800, the Euro-American "town-making" that occurred prior to the Revolution in backcountry areas of Pennsylvania, such as Lancaster, York, and Dauphin counties, crept into the trans-Allegheny region. Agricultural cultivation, not American Indian settlements, now delineated the boundaries separating civilization from "native wildness," as Sally lamented in her narrative.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ SAH, October, 10, 1800, 182.

¹⁵⁰ *From Sugar Camps to Star Barns: Rural Life and Landscape in a Western Pennsylvania Community* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 2-3. In her study of early Pennsylvania and Somerset County landscapes, McMurry describes the backcountry attitude towards metropolitan culture as "ambivalent." She finds that people in this region accepted some of the dominant cultural norms of "settled society" while rejecting other more "refined" expressions of the older societies they left behind.

¹⁵¹ SAH, October 11, 1800, 185.

Historian Richard K. MacMaster further observes that settlers' "understanding of the Pennsylvania frontier" was fluid and "changed over time from a defensive line separating them from their Indian neighbors to an ever shifting boundary between older settlements and land as yet unimproved by settlers."¹⁵² In 1800, this boundary rested at the foot of the Alleghenies. In the following chapter, I examine Sally's assessment of the physical conditions and her responses to the natural surroundings she experienced in traversing the backcountry.

¹⁵² SAH, October 11, 1800, 185; Richard K. MacMaster, "Merchants, Shopkeepers, and Town-Making Fever," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 81, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 345. I am borrowing the term "town-making" from Richard K. MacMaster to describe the economic development that occurred in Pennsylvania.

Chapter Two: Topographical Crossings: Travel, Hardships, and Nature

Sally traveled to Pennsylvania's backcountry to escape her past. She also seems to have been looking for adventure. These dual purposes are suggested in the narrative by her responses to the challenges the natural world presented in her journey. When she wrote about the rigors of travel and the natural landscape, she rendered it as both an actual and an aesthetic experience. On October 12, 1800, for example, as she gazed at the panoramic view of the Alleghenies from a mountain top lodge, she wrote:

Here we are presented with a striking Contrast. On one hand lies a fine level Country, smooth as the unruffled face of Heaven, in all the pride of luxurious Vegetation. On the other, clad in awful sublimity and majestic grandeur, rise the stupendous Mountains; which heave their forest-crowned summits to the clouds

There shroud their awful brow, whose nodding frown
Sheds a deep, dark, and chilling horror round.

Surely, one would think that Nature had here drawn her boundary line; fixed her limits with the most impregnable barriers and said to the intrepid sons of men, 'Hitherto, but no farther, shall ye come!' ¹⁵³

After five days of traveling, Sally was approximately seventy-seven miles from her Lancaster County home. She had ventured into an unfamiliar geographical and cultural landscape that would prove to be both a physical and metaphorical journey of self-awareness and personal growth.

¹⁵³ SAH, October 11, 183-184. Hastings paraphrases Job 38:11 KJV: "And [god] said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Sally's blending of realistic detail, the sublime, and religious imagery is distinctive. She romantically interpreted Pennsylvania's western region as a forbidding place of beauty. For Sally, the mountains symbolically marked a border between cultivated society and the wilderness. At the same time, with a biblical phrase—"Hitherto, but no farther, shall ye come!"—she linked the landscape to God and her religious heritage, intriguingly reinforcing ties to her past and establishing the audaciousness of her own physical venture into an uncertain future.

This chapter builds on Imbarrato's argument by examining Sally's responses to her physical surroundings. Sally's engagement with the environment as both an ambivalent participant and admiring observer indicates her desire to transcend social norms and assert her place in westward movement. First, I look at Sally's perspective of the rigors and hardships she and other early women travelers faced in crossing the Alleghenies. Her journey was physically demanding, and at times, an ordeal worsened by flooding rains, snow, and ice. In overcoming the physical demands of the landscape, Sally portrays herself as a strong, courageous pioneer heroine. Then, I explore Sally's more literary and aesthetic interpretations of nature. Sally uses adaptations of the picturesque and the sublime in her descriptions of the natural world. By showing that she enjoyed nature, Sally counters stereotypes that aesthetic appreciation was primarily a masculine endeavor.

Sally's mix of the real and the literary in her descriptions reflects shifting cultural paradigms surrounding travel and writing. First, her narrative was written and published at a transitional time in westward settlement. Published a mere five years after the Louisiana Purchase, constructions of the West as a sociopolitical place of opportunity were evolving. For instance, Americans still viewed the remote areas of the Allegheny region as an empty

“wilderness.” In fact, it was called the “backcountry,” a term which, according to historian Jack P. Greene, “carried with it a cultural as well as a geographical connotation and strongly implies a basic socioeconomic, even an ideological, unity among the people who inhabited the area.”¹⁵⁴ Yet, while Americans saw the frontier as less socially, culturally, and economically civilized, as Greene asserts, the nation’s ethos regarding westward settlement became increasingly imperialistic and tied to national identity.

By 1800, Americans started thinking about the frontier as a landscape of distinct places. Federal legislation, for example, advanced white settlement into the area by selling the land in cheap parcels and on credit, in addition to systematically displacing American Indian populations.¹⁵⁵ So it is not surprising that Sally’s evaluations of the frontier are complicated. As she critiques the harsh realities of frontier travel, she also affirms the region’s possibilities as a place of enjoyable exploration and economic opportunity.

Secondly, Sally’s emotional, subjective style suggests a Romantic influence. Her self-reflective mode indicates a desire to go beyond traditional gender norms, as she establishes an adventure-seeking identity that emerges over the course of her narrative. In general, stasis defined the lives of most women. As Imbarrato points out, pregnancy, child rearing, and household management kept women close to the domestic sphere. These practical matters also posed unique challenges for women who traveled.¹⁵⁶ Sally’s rhetorical development as a

¹⁵⁴ Jack P. Greene, *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 181.

¹⁵⁵ Imbarrato, 14-16. Some examples of federal legislation include: Jefferson’s Report of a Plan of Government for the Western Territory (1784), the Northwest Ordinance (1787), and the Frontier Land Act (1800).

¹⁵⁶ Imbarrato, 5.

traveling woman who takes on risk outside the domestic realm is interesting because it gave readers an alternate model of early national womanhood that different from traditional conceptions of women as solely wives and mothers. In addition, her narrative demonstrates (then and now) that women also traveled to and settled the West.

At the same time, she documents her struggle to reconcile the public activities of travel and writing with Early Republican notions of domesticity. Susan Imbarrato argues that for women traveling to resettle in the West, the “journey was often a test.”¹⁵⁷ For them to succeed in their new lives, they would have to learn how to adapt to their new and dynamic surroundings. In this regard, Sally’s narrative became a vehicle for her to experiment with different writing genres and modes of self-expression in her descriptions about the wilderness landscape. Travel away from East coast standards and norms gave Sally the freedom to try on different Romantic identities. Over time, she changes from a naïve traveler and caretaker to a hardy pioneer and future inhabitant of the West.

“This Morning We Crossed the Susquehanna”

In April 1800, as bitter political partisanship threatened to undo the new nation, the Susquehanna River flooded.¹⁵⁸ A wet fall followed the wet spring—portending poor conditions

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁵⁸ *Lycoming County: Its Organization and Condensed History* (Williamsport, Pa: Gazette and Bulletin Printing House, 1895), 76. Main stem flooding of the Susquehanna occurred in April of that year. In *Lycoming County*, John F. Meginniss cited an “Old Record” as stating, “The floods this spring have been unusually large; the principal one was after a heavy, continued rain of three days and three nights” (76). Although Pennsylvania weather can be capricious, consistent patterns of seasonal temperatures and precipitation levels tend to develop

for traveling into Pennsylvania’s interior regions. So it was on October 8, after journeying eighteen miles from her Maytown home “through very swampy roads, occasioned by the late excessive rains,” Sally faced a muddy, rain-swollen Susquehanna River at Harris’s Ferry.¹⁵⁹ Fourteen years earlier, when Sally was thirteen, the river had spilled over its banks—memorably engulfing her community in a brown sea littered with pumpkins swept downstream from the state’s northern counties. The “Great Pumpkin Flood,” as it came to be called, quickly passed into the local lore about the river.¹⁶⁰

We do not know if this childhood event shaped Sally’s perceptions of the Susquehanna. She certainly would have understood the river’s power to upset small water craft, as well as its power to transport her, like those pumpkins, into a new place. Consequently, on that October day in 1800, a “spiritless” and “unhappy” Sally was afraid. She wrote, “Such is my fear of venturing into a Ferry-boat that it required a full quarter of an hour’s Reasoning to convince me

and persist for noticeable periods of time. Between 1780 and 1800, the region was experiencing warm, dry summers followed by warm, wet autumns. See Michael David Scholl, “The American Yeoman: An Historical Ecology of Production in Colonial Pennsylvania” (PhD dissertation, University of North Carolina, 2008), 91. Sally’s travel account seems to confirm a rainy October in 1800.

¹⁵⁹ Present-day Harrisburg.

¹⁶⁰ “History of Flooding in the Susquehanna Basin,” *Susquehanna Flood Forecast and Warning System*, November 15, 2013, accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.susquehannafloodforecasting.org/flood-history.html>. Since the beginning of recording keeping of river flooding in 1810, the main stem of the Susquehanna has flooded fourteen times; Susan Q. Stranahan, *Susquehanna, River of Dreams* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1993), 119. The “Great Pumpkin Flood” of October, 1786, in particular, passed into collective memory for the breadth of its devastation and the way in which rising waters uprooted pumpkins from the northern branch of the river and swept them downstream into Lancaster, Dauphin, and York counties.

that, to a Predestinarian, the greatest Danger, and no Danger, is absolutely the same thing!”¹⁶¹ Although Sally questioned her beliefs in that moment, she did not forsake the journey.

Travel into and around Pennsylvania’s interior and western sections at the turn of the nineteenth century was extraordinarily difficult. It was painfully slow, physically challenging, and at times dangerous. The modes of transportation—flatboat, foot, horseback, and covered wagon—were not much different than those used in the colonial period. A traveler moving through the trans-Allegheny region could expect to cover only about ten miles a day. Stamina and endurance were also required to traverse bodies of water, climb the Allegheny Mountains, and negotiate barely passable dirt roads. “To travel through this Region,” Sally confessed to her readers after four days on the road, “demands the exercise of Fortitude; and those who are Strangers to this Virtue, will learn how to appreciate its value.”¹⁶² Sally most likely recast the physical challenges she faced into a moral exercise to elide social reproach. Sally transgressed ideal notions of womanhood when she left home and gave up the primary care of her children to another woman (her mother). By presenting her adventure as a lesson and trial, Sally domesticated the experience. Her words, however, call into question contemporary depictions of genteel women as weak and inactive. As Sally’s narrative demonstrates, women challenged gender stereotypes by adapting to travel’s difficulties and overcoming dangerous situations.

The period’s crude modes of transportation, in particular, tested women’s physical and mental strength. For example, Sally’s ferry experience, cited at the beginning of this section, exemplifies the anxieties water travel engendered for women travelers. Since it would be almost

¹⁶¹ SAH, October 8, 1800, 176.

¹⁶² SAH, October 11, 1800.

two more decades until the advent of canals and steamboats, non-mechanized wooden vessels, such as arks, rafts, canoes, and flatboats were used to make river crossings. This type of travel was unpredictable, and even hazardous, depending on weather and river conditions. Hence, stories of boating accidents and drownings on the Susquehanna were not unusual. One such “melancholy accident” reported in the *Carlisle Gazette* occurred during a storm in the winter of 1790, when Robert Gray and his wife and two other travelers drowned when their canoe overturned in the middle of the river near Berry’s Falls in Cumberland County.¹⁶³ As a resident of Maytown, a river community, Sally would have been familiar with these stories which depicted the river as a place of mobility but also as a place of danger.

Although Sally most likely boarded a larger flatboat (one that would accommodate her family’s covered wagon), these vessels also presented problems. Flatboats, propelled by the water’s currents, relied upon high, fast-moving water. The shallow waters of the Susquehanna River during dry periods combined with its “summer rocks,” geological ridges that lie across its riverbed, made boat crossings, always dependent on weather, even more difficult.¹⁶⁴ Despite the increased dangers in navigating swift-moving currents, many travelers heading west, like Sally and her family, scheduled their journeys during the more perilous rainy seasons (fall and spring). Thus, Sally’s fear in making the river journey in such a craft was not unwarranted.

¹⁶³ Extract of a letter from Harrisburgh [sic] dated December 16, 1789, *Carlisle Gazette*, January 13, 1790. The story notes that the cold water temperature most likely caused the deaths of two of the travelers.

¹⁶⁴ Donald M. Hoskins, “The Rocks of Summer,” *Pennsylvania Geology* 24 (1993): 2. In general, Pennsylvania summers tend to be periods of “lessened rainfall and lowered streamflow during which rocks, normally obscured by winter’s ice and spring’s high water” become visible. When the rocks are exposed, canoes scrape against them. The rocks also impede the river’s flow and can hinder travel across the river.

Sally would have encountered a dynamic situation in Dauphin County quite different from her experiences in Donegal Township. Harris's Ferry would have been bustling with activity in October. As a major transportation and storage center for the nation's grain market, Sally's family would have been competing with dozens of traders with pack horses to gain passage on the boats heading south and west.¹⁶⁵ So, while travelers could get across the river at Harris's Ferry in under an hour, they might have to wait hours or even days if weather conditions were poor.¹⁶⁶ As another female traveler, Elizabeth van Horne, complained about her crossing at Harris's Ferry on October 16, 1807, "We find so many teams bound for Pittsburgh that we could not cross untill ten oclock [sic]."¹⁶⁷ Although Sally does not mention it, the unpredictability that characterized travel sites like Harris's Ferry most likely added to her anxiety.

¹⁶⁵ Luther Reily Kelker, *History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania* (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1907), 307. In 1790, for example, over 150,000 bushels of wheat passed through the site from the upper Susquehanna on its way to Philadelphia.

¹⁶⁶ *Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country* (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear & Bichbaum, 1810), 42. Fortescue Cuming, in February 1807, writes that it took twenty minutes to cross an ice-filled Susquehanna River at the "Harrisburgh Ferry." Harris' Ferry's central location in Dauphin County, nearly midway between the Delaware and Ohio River Valleys, made it an ideal travel nexus, linking the eastern seaboard to the nation's interior sections and beyond. By the mid-1780s, Harris' Ferry boasted almost one hundred houses and was an established way-station. In addition to its role as a travel center, Harris' Ferry and Middletown served as a grain storage center. According to Kelker, in just one year (1790), one hundred and fifty thousand bushels of wheat were transported down the Susquehanna River and passed through Middletown (Harris' Ferry) on its way to Philadelphia (307). See James T. Lemon's, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1972) and Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) for analyses of the organization and trade network development in Lancaster and Dauphin Counties and the mid-Atlantic region.

¹⁶⁷ Elizabeth van Horne, *Journey to the Promised Land: Journal of Elizabeth Van Horne 1807*, ed. Elizabeth Collette (Pittsburgh: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1939), 253.

Some travelers also experienced accidents on board crowded ferry boats. Ferry boats were usually teeming with passengers, horses, carriages, wagons, and livestock. Sally's party was no different, consisting of ten people, including several young children, a large horse-drawn wagon filled with their possessions (most likely a covered wagon about eighteen feet long and four feet wide), and probably four to six horses (see fig. 12).¹⁶⁸ With such a menagerie of people, animals, and wheeled vehicles on board a small boat all at the same time, it is easy to see how mishaps might occur. Van Horne recounted a harrowing incident that exemplifies the potential calamities Sally faced in her ferry trip:

At Harrisburgh we were overtaken by Mr. Stockton of New Ark & Mr. Schenk bound for Cincinnati [sic]. In crossing the Susquehanna this morning they took in a large dog that was swimming [sic] across the river—by shaking himself the horses took fright and jump'd overboard—in order to make room for the little waggon in the same boat we everyone but Thomas got in to the carriage but being near shore the horses soon touch'd bottom and loosed themselves by breaking the harness by that means the carriage did not overset and we got safe to land but met with a very great fright.¹⁶⁹

Despite the risks, neither van Horne nor Sally openly declared themselves to be courageous in crossing the river. Nevertheless, their commentary speaks volumes about women travelers'

¹⁶⁸ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178. For a history of the Conestoga wagon, see Arthur L. Reist, *The Conestoga Wagon: Masterpiece of the Blacksmith* (Lancaster, PA: Forry and Hacker, 1975).

¹⁶⁹ van Horne, 254.



Figure 12. Pavel Petrovich Svinin. *A Ferry Scene on the Susquehanna at Wright's Ferry, near Havre de Grace*, watercolor, 1811-1813. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York.

This painting by Russian artist and diplomat Pavel Petrovich Svinin depicts a flatboat crossing the Susquehanna. Although it portrays a ferry location about thirty miles south of Harris' Ferry, this image captures the precarious nature of ferry travel by showing the passengers standing in the boat and sitting on top of the horses as the operators try to steer the craft through swift-moving currents and around the many summer rocks jutting above the water. The woman traveler, in particular, keeps her balance by holding onto the carriage. *Source*: Wikimedia Commons, accessed September 19, 2016, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File>.

ability to cope with new and changing situations. The next section looks at the physical ordeals Sally faced on land after crossing the river.

“To Ascend these Mountains...Is a Task Truly Arduous”

For travelers headed west across Pennsylvania, summiting the Alleghenies was daunting. The mountains, a part of the western-central Appalachian Mountain range, posed a forbidding mental and physical challenge for even the most experienced traveler. In the east, the Allegheny Front, a series of steep parallel ridges—the Allegheny, Laurel, and Chestnut—commands the region with rises as high as three thousand feet in places. Only a few natural (and treacherous) passes through the mountains existed, severely limiting travelers’ choices in negotiating the climb.¹⁷⁰

Like other travelers coming from eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Sally’s party used an old military road that General Forbes had cut through the mountains in 1758.¹⁷¹ The 200

¹⁷⁰ Dave Hurst, *Pennsylvania’s Allegheny Mountains: The First Frontier* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2009), 13-14. The term “Allegheny Mountains” is problematic. First, there are various spellings, including “Allegheny,” “Allegany,” and “Alleghenies.” Second, the “Alleghenies” are not geologically mountains. Rather, they are ribs of hard bedrock that are part of the vast Appalachian Mountain range. Third, there are no officially designated boundaries. As Dave Hurst notes, on maps, the Alleghenies clearly extend from northern Pennsylvania to southwestern Virginia. Their east-west boundaries, however, are harder to delineate. Geographers maintain that the Alleghenies should only include the Allegheny, Laurel, and Chestnut Ridges, as well as a plateau extending from northcentral through southwestern Pennsylvania. Others, including tourism and government groups, add landforms east of the Allegheny Front that belong to a different geological province, such as Tussey and Jacks Mountains.

¹⁷¹ McMurry, 8; Ridner, 30. Three major transportation routes served migrants and merchants moving across Pennsylvania from southeast to northwest in the early national period: the National Road (after 1811), the Glade Road, and the Forbes Road. Forbes Road, also known as Raystown Path, followed an old Indian trading path that went from Shippensburg to the

mile route stretched from Carlisle; passed through the fort towns of Shippensburg, Loudon, Littleton, Bedford, and Ligonier; and ended at the forks of the Ohio River in present-day Pittsburgh (see fig. 13).¹⁷² Although broad and level in the low lands, the road was exceedingly rocky, barely passable, and so dangerous in the mountain passes that travel on a horse was not possible. As Sally lamented in Fannetsburg on October 11, “To ascend these Mountains on foot (and not one of us will ride over them) is a task truly arduous. To descend them, is by no means less difficult; as they are exceedingly stony, that one can scarce get stable footing.”¹⁷³ Such complaints about the region’s poorly-maintained roads advanced notions that the backcountry was less civilized and more primitive, therefore vastly different from the East.

Sally’s narrative brings attention to women travelers’ more ambivalent responses in meeting the challenges of trans-Allegheny travel. As Annette Kolodny argues, women also dreamed of transforming the wilderness, but they were more reluctant “conquerors.” In particular, she notes, domesticity tempered mastery and conquest of the land on the wooded

summit of the Allegheny Ridge. Opened in 1755, Brigadier General John Forbes reopened it to near Bedford and from there opened a road along the Indian Raystown Path to near Ligonier. The British military used the road to transport supplies during the French and Indian War. For an overview of the area’s early roads see George R. Beyer, *Pennsylvania’s Roads: Before the Automobile* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission), 1972). Judith Ridner further notes, Forbes Road was one of several well-traveled trading and migration paths in Pennsylvania that offered access to the coast and the interior.

¹⁷² James P. Myers, “The New Way to the Forks of the Ohio: Reflections on John Pott’s Map of 1758,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, (1998): 385-410.

¹⁷³ SAH, October 11, 1800, 186.

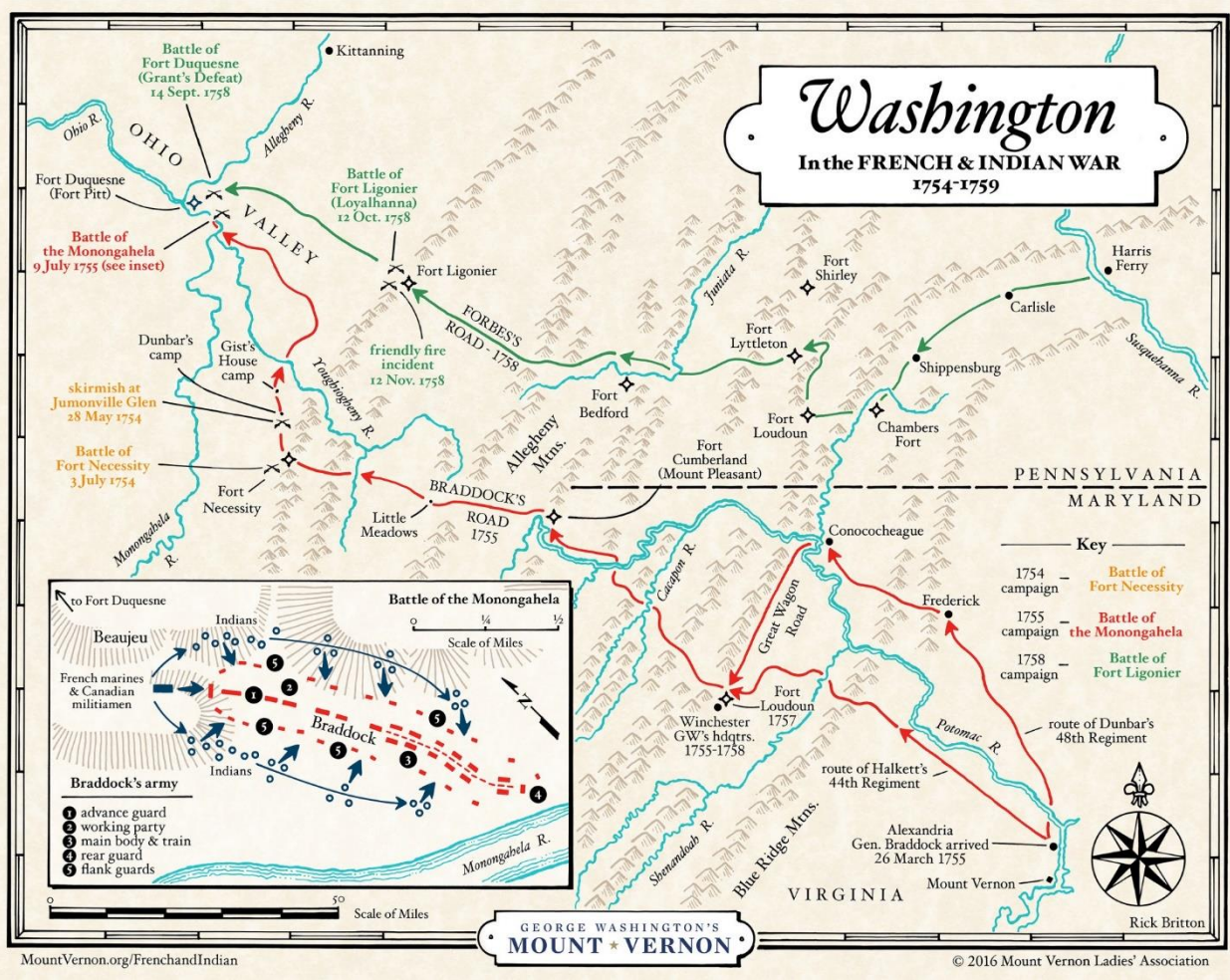


Figure 13. Map of Forbes and Braddocks Road.

Although this map depicts Forbes Road decades before Sally's journey, she followed the same route outlined here with green arrows. She crossed the Susquehanna River at Harris' Ferry (noted on the top right side of the drawing) and passed through Carlisle, Shippensburg, Fort Loudon, Fort Bedford, and Fort Ligonier. The map also shows the mountain crossings and ridges Sally described in her narrative. *Source:* Mountvernon.org, Mount Vernon Ladies Association, 2017, accessed January 2, 2017, <http://www.mountvernon.org/>.

frontiers of the northeast and Ohio valley.¹⁷⁴ Margaret van Horne Dwight, for instance, wrote about her travels across the Alleghenies in the first decade of the nineteenth century. A New Englander, Dwight journeyed from New Haven, Connecticut to visit relatives in Warren, Ohio in 1810. In a *Journey to Ohio*, Dwight adopts an epistolary mode similar to Sally by addressing her account to her “friend” Elizabeth. Her description also reflects a mixed commentary regarding the social and cultural possibilities found in Pennsylvania’s backcountry. In particular, Dwight found Pennsylvania’s more pluralistic society unsettling. “The whole world nor any thing in it, would tempt me to stay in this State [Pennsylvania] three months,” Dwight wrote on November 18, 1810 when she was “2 miles from Laurel Hill” in the Alleghenies. “I dislike everything belonging to it—I am not so foolish as to suppose there are no better people in it than those we have seen; but let them be ever so good, I never desire to see any of them.”¹⁷⁵ Dwight’s remarks illustrate the conflict women felt when encountering people and places at odds with their ideas of home.

Travel accounts written by early national men traveling this region, on the other hand, viewed the landscapes with an opportunistic eye. Male writers, such as John Filson and Joshua Gilpin, emphasized exploration, politics, geography, and economic objectives in order to explicitly promote Anglo-European settlement of the region.¹⁷⁶ Schoolmaster John Filson

¹⁷⁴ Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 27, 29, 33.

¹⁷⁵ Margaret Van Horne Dwight, *A Journey to Ohio in 1810*, ed. Max Farrand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1913), 48.

¹⁷⁶ John Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke* (1784); An Online Electronic Text Edition" (1784). *Electronic Texts in American Studies*. Paper 3. Accessed November 30, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/3>; Joshua Gilpin and Joseph E. Walker *Pleasure and Business in Western Pennsylvania, The Journal of Joshua Gilpin (1809)*,

(c.1744-1788), for example, exemplifies these characteristics. Filson journeyed from his home in Pennsylvania to the Kentucky territory at least four times in the mid- to late- 1780s. In *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke* (1784), Filson's subdivisions clearly reveal the geographic and scientific focus of the account: "Situation and Boundaries," "Rivers," "Nature of the Soil," "Air and Climate," "Soil and Produce," "Quadrupeds," "Curiosities," "Inhabitants," "Rights of Land," and "Trade of Kentucke." Historian Pamela Regis explains that Filson, a surveyor, wrote and researched about Kentucky in order to increase the value of the land to promote Anglo-European settlement.¹⁷⁷ Filson's title page, as shown in fig. 14, gives evidence to the journal's purpose to convey information gleaned from surveying of the land with an idea to expand the new nation's physical borders.

A brief comparison of Sally's narrative to Joshua Gilpin's 1809 travel account further illuminates women's more vexed relationship with settling the American wilderness. Joshua Gilpin, a Quaker merchant, traveled from his Philadelphia home to Pittsburgh in 1809 to conduct a business survey in nearby Redstone. In *Journal of a Tour from Philadelphia thro the Western Counties of Pennsylvania in the Months of September and October, 1809*, Gilpin describes his

ed. Joseph E. Walker (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1975). For a literary summary of the scholarship outlining the varying goals and motivations of early American men and women travelers, see Brigitte Georgi-Findlay, *The Frontiers of Women's Writing* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1996).

¹⁷⁷ For an analysis of Filson's accounts as works of natural science, see Pamela Regis, *Describing Early America: Bartram, Jefferson, Crèvecoeur, and the Influence of Natural History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 136-137. Most people remember Filson for his narrative of the frontiersman, Daniel Boone, which appears as an appendix to *Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucke*.

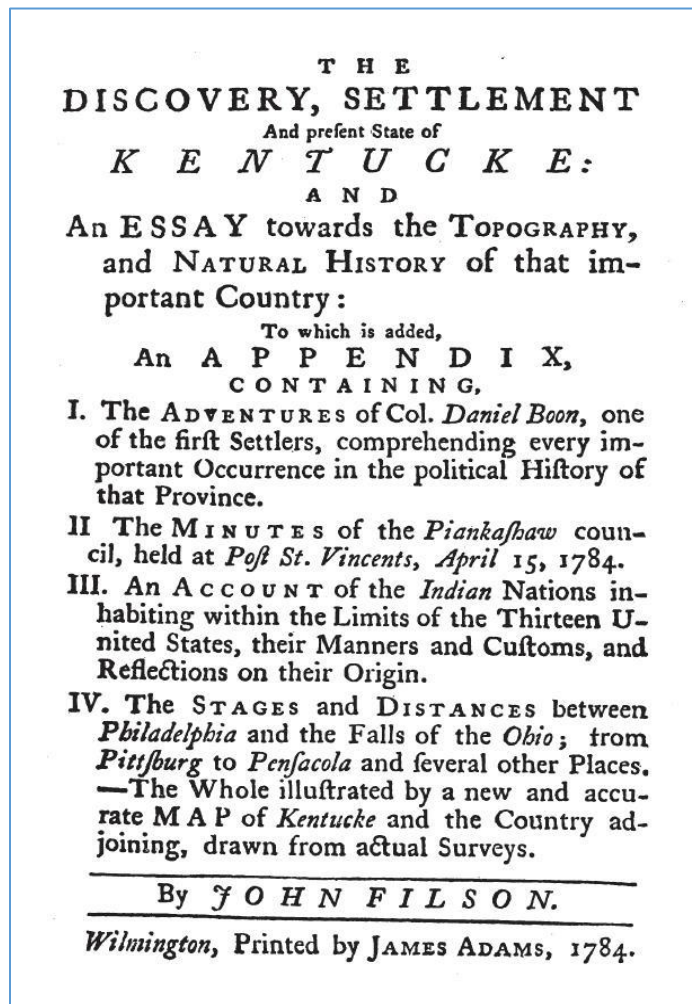


Figure 14. Title page of John Filson's *The Discovery, Settlement and present State of Kentucke*. 1784.

Filson's title and sectioned content, as shown on his title page, illustrates the geographical and political focus of early national male-authored travel accounts. Source: John Filson, ed. Paul Royster, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke: An Online Electronic Text Edition* (1784). Electronic Text in American Studies, Paper 3. Accessed November 30, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/3>.

trans-Allegheny trip in an objective style that starkly contrasts to Sally's subjective narrative. Like Sally, Gilpin comments about poor traveling conditions and the "rude and solitary" settlements he encountered in the backcountry.¹⁷⁸ He does not engage with the geographical and cultural landscapes introspectively, however, as Sally does in her account. He centers his critique on the region's economic prospects and potential for land development.

Gilpin's descriptions unambiguously promote westward expansion. For instance, near the foot of the South Mountain in Chambersburg in Franklin County on September 18 and 19, 1809, Gilpin highlighted land values. "Tho the cultivation continues good & soil also, there is an evident decline from that of yesterday & today.—Our Landlord informs us that the price of Land here is about \$30 to \$40 per acre in the neighborhood of York it is about \$80," he quantitatively wrote, suggesting the ability to purchase land at "cheap" prices. At the top of the mountain, Gilpin underscored the area's potential for prosperous white settlement by recounting a conversation with a local innkeeper, "Newmann [the landlord] tells us that he has a farm of 360 acres here--& it cost him 5 [pounds] or \$13.33 per acre—it appears very rough—however he says he can make a good deal of meadow & it is astonishing how...these Germans can clear a rough soil & turn every drop of water to profit"¹⁷⁹ This commentary typifies the business-oriented content of Gilpin's account. Gilpin's trans-Allegheny journey was not one of personal transformation. It was a crossing made in hopes of economic transformation.

For Sally, the mountains were symbolic thresholds. Her responses are ambiguous as she simultaneously conquers the landscape with each mountain ascent and mourns the life she left

¹⁷⁸ Gilpin, 17.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

behind in the East. As she went deeper into the backcountry, traveling conditions became more formidable, testing her strength. Sally's encounters with the mountain landscape gave her the opportunity to break from traditional notions of domesticity and women's place within that sphere. As we will see, Sally's responses to the blurring of private and public spaces is an ambivalent mix of observer and participant. As the narrative progresses through time, she takes a more active role in leading her family across the mountains.

For example, as Forbes Road took them into the first mountain on October 11, 1800, she was an interested naturalist observer. Although Sally depicted the mountain climbing experiences as exhausting, she viewed the forest landscape with an admiring eye. She remarked upon the warm "Autumnal Sun," and nature's spectacle moved her to reflect on God's hand in the "masterly Production of Nature." She commented on the scenery with a mixture of realistic detail and conventional imagery that inferred a pleasant wild beauty to her readers: the "Mountains heaped on Mountains," the "persevering" pine trees, the "luxuriant growth of wild Vines, the "low species of the Thorn-tree," the "loose" sandy soil, and the "craggy Cliffs."¹⁸⁰ Sally's romantic rendering of the scene downplays and even contests notions that nature is a dangerous place. In showing appreciation for the landscape, she undermined stereotypes that portrayed women as fearful of nature. This point in her narrative also marks Sally's transition from a romantic heroine to a hardy pioneer in preparation for her new backcountry life.

Her perspective shifts the next day as her party prepared to climb the Third Mountain. The Alleghenies now are presented as a physical and mental hardship that must be overcome. On October 12, in Huntingdon County, Sally began by noting the poor weather conditions: "This

¹⁸⁰ SAH, October 11, 1800, 185.

morning is cloudy, and portends a rainy day,” she gloomily stated, an ominous foreshadowing of a more threatening landscape to come. Before crossing the mountain, Sally surveyed her surroundings with a sense of loss. She did not view her upcoming venture with a conquering or a naturalist eye. Rather, she poetically framed the experience through a perspective of domesticity. The following verses illustrate her ambiguous perspective on climbing the mountain:

Thro’ desart hills and lonely wilds I roam;
 Unnumber’d toils increasing as I go;
 Far from my dearest Friends, my native home,
 And Happiness, alas! I fear from you.

Back, thro’ the dreary void, I cast my eyes,
 And feel a rising pang at each remove;
 Close as the cords of life are Nature’s ties;
 And stronger far than Death, are those of Love!¹⁸¹

Here, she cast nature as a “dreary void,” a barrier separating her from her home. The backcountry landscape was no longer a panorama to be admired but a “desart” and “lonely” wild place filled with “toils,” a place to survive in order to reach her new frontier home. By reflecting upon her relocation to the West, Sally felt hauntingly dislocated from her eastern friends and family.

Significantly, Sally alluded to popular primordial wilderness mythology in her poem. When Sally referred to the backcountry as “desart hills” and “lonely wilds” and her journey over the mountains as a “remove” from her past, she echoed the language found in Puritan captivity tales, such as Mary Rowlandson’s account, which imagined the frontier as a howling, uncivilized

¹⁸¹ SAH, October 12, 1800, 186.

wilderness. Captivity tales featured heroines, white women captured by Indians and forced to march through the wilderness, who “read” their wilderness experiences through a spiritual lens. Eventually, the women in these stories were redeemed from captivity through their faith in god. As Annette Kolodny notes, the wilderness fantasy presented in captivity narratives remained popular throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, after the Revolution as white migration into the new nation’s interior increased, the tales focused more on the hardships of the wilderness rather than the trials of captivity.¹⁸² In this regard, Sally imagined the Allegheny landscape as a remote, isolated space—much like Mary Rowlandson—that separated her from civilization and her friends and family. In connecting to this wilderness trope, Sally’s narrative illustrates how the mythic and the realistic frequently intersected in depictions of the frontier in early national literature.

Sally’s description of the Third Mountain’s topography also reflects how travel altered women’s perceptions about place and themselves. In her account of the experience, Sally began by emphasizing the exceptionally perilous environment. She wrote, the “steep ascent ... [was] ... rendered doubly difficult by the showers that were falling which made the Road so slippery that it was often impossible for us to keep our feet.”¹⁸³ The physical exertion required to climb the mountain in such terrible weather conditions overwhelmed Sally’s party. Thus, a half mile from the mountain top, the exhausted travelers stopped for the night when they “came to a Fire” tended by some other travelers. In ordinary circumstances, Sally most likely would never have

¹⁸² Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 28-29, 32-33.

¹⁸³ SAH, October 12, 1800, 187.

considered sleeping outdoors with a group of strangers. However, mountain climbing during a snowstorm necessitated new thinking, and she and her family slept on the mountain that night with people they did not know.

This impromptu social situation destabilized Sally's genteel sensibilities regarding domesticity. "Here, on the brow of the solitary mountain, three poor Families had passed the Night. With truth it may be said, that their Couch was the cold Earth; their Chamber, the unlimited regions of Space; and their Covering, the spacious canopy of Heaven," Sally metaphorically explained.¹⁸⁴ At this moment, all three families were in the same situation and equally at the mercy of nature and God. Sally's vividly drawn sketch, unsettling and poignant, underscored the blurring of public and private spaces during travel. As Lucia McMahon points out, early national Americans increasingly "recast" the traditional kin-related family unit from a "social to private space."¹⁸⁵ If polite society located the ideal republican family within the private walls of a house, how could sleeping outdoors on a mountain top with "three [unrelated] families" be an acceptable domestic space? Were material accoutrements, like furniture and textiles, necessary to be safe and comfortable? Although a temporary state, Sally's experience that day transgressed the normal boundaries ascribed to women, leading her to reassess traditional meanings of home and family.

As such, Sally domesticated the event with biblical allusion. After recounting the story about her night on the mountain, she referenced the ancient Hebrews' struggle with temporal decadence: "Little, O ye Sons and Daughters of Affluence and Luxury—who stretch yourselves

¹⁸⁴ SAH, October 12, 1800, 187.

¹⁸⁵ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 84.

on Couches of Ivory... little do you think of the Toils, the Privations, and Sufferings which numbers of the human Family daily endure!¹⁸⁶ While meant to be instructive, Sally's reference ironically contradicts the realities of her genteel lifestyle. First, the family made the journey with slaves or servants to help them. Secondly, their covered wagon was filled with material goods, as Sally noted, "At this Fire, we determined to prepare our Breakfast; as we had every necessary Article with us, except Water."¹⁸⁷ Her navigation across the Alleghenies, thus, reveals the complex negotiation women travelers made between ideal domesticity and their public mobility. A genteel woman, Sally expressed piety to give meaning to her unusual experience. She also recognized that survival on the frontier required at least a temporary acceptance of different social norms. She would have to adjust her thinking about the meaning of home, as frontier life necessitated material and social sacrifice.

This tension between stasis and mobility reaches a symbolic climax near the end of the journey. As the travelers get farther away from the East, the backcountry landscape gradually transforms from a picture of late fall to a winter scene, representing Sally's own trepidation about westward settlement. For example, On October 23 at Laurel Hill, Sally wrote that the "rain and snow began to fall in great abundance."¹⁸⁸ She also described the following day as "snowy, and very cold." In her October 25 entry, Sally explained how the family crossed Chestnut Ridge in life-threatening weather conditions: "Had not the Storm suddenly abated yesterday, I believe

¹⁸⁶ SAH, October 12, 1800, 187. Sally's allusion is a paraphrase of the Old Testament bible verse Amos 6:5.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁸⁸ SAH, October 23, 1800, 194.

you would not have been troubled with reading this Account,” she dramatically remarked. “For, I am of opinion, we would have finished our Pilgrimage, through Life, a few paces from the summit of Chestnut Ridge.” In contemplating her mortality, Sally philosophized on the spiritual or metaphysical meaning of her trans-Allegheny journey, her “pilgrimage.” This sentiment reveals the way in which Sally tried to make significant meaning from her journey. By interpreting it as a moral and religious experience (“pilgrimage”), she connected to both a larger human experience and American women’s captivity narrative traditions. Paradoxically, in this same passage, Sally reinforced traditional domesticity by matter-of-factly reassuring her readers, “Today we enjoy the Comforts of a warm House, and Excellent Fare. Here we remain stationary.”¹⁸⁹

The rigors of wilderness travel challenged Sally. She made a river crossing on board a primitive ferry boat; she trampled across rain-soaked, barely passable roads; she climbed ice-covered mountains. In doing so, Sally showed women’s mental and physical strength in westward travel. She transcended Early Republican gender boundaries limiting women to traditional ideas about domesticity. In the next section, I explore Sally’s imaginative engagement with nature and look at how the wilderness also gave Sally a space to literarily transcend gender boundaries.

¹⁸⁹ SAH, October 25, 1800, 199.

“All Here is Wild—Wild Beyond the Reach of Description”

Travel offered Sally the chance to explore nature and give her readers images of the Pennsylvania backcountry. She draws upon two popular Romantic aesthetic languages in her descriptions: Edmund Burke’s theory of the sublime and William Gilpin’s theory of the picturesque.¹⁹⁰ Although both approaches encouraged travelers to seek out beauty and inspiration in the natural landscape, they were different interpretative modes. As Elizabeth Bohls explains, the sublime was an “affective” mode which stressed the observer’s strong emotional responses to entire scenes of grandeur. The picturesque, on the other hand, derived from landscape painting and focused on beauty. As such, it “emphasized form and composition.”¹⁹¹ Significantly, both modes presumed universal standards written from male perspectives; thereby, women’s appropriations of them tend to be equivocal and unstable.

In this regard, Sally’s narrative shows an inventive blending of different aesthetic genres. Although she focused primarily on the sublime, Sally used the picturesque to frame her scenic descriptions and added religious, classical, and poetic expressions to her interpretations. As Bohls argues, women writers “treated these categories opportunistically, exploiting their ambiguities through creative reappropriation and redefinition.”¹⁹² Sally’s adaptations thus reflect

¹⁹⁰ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1757); William Gilpin, *Three Essays: on picturesque beauty, on picturesque travel, and on sketching landscape* (London: Richard Blamire, 1794).

¹⁹¹ Elizabeth Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 14.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

women's contested relationship with male aesthetics. Likewise, by using landscape aesthetics in her writing, Sally dared to construct a Romantic persona that fell outside the norms of middle-class femininity.

The Allegheny Mountains inspired Sally's use of the sublime/picturesque to convey the grandness of the landscape and immensity of her experience. The sublime in nature, according to eighteenth-century philosophers, referred to objects that could be described as uncommon, unbounded, unlimited, great, and spacious. In *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1761), Edward Burke claimed that human beings experience intense emotions, particularly pain, terror, awe, astonishment, and horror, when observing sublime nature. These objects, according to Burke, are "terrible, with regards to sight;" "vast in their dimensions;" "rugged and negligent;" "dark and gloomy;" and "solid, and even massive."¹⁹³ Sally uses this standard Burkean vocabulary throughout her narrative when depicting her overwhelming emotional response to the mountainscape.

One of the most notable examples occurs in a passage on October 11 in Franklin County. The description was written in response to viewing the forest-covered ridge known as First Mountain. In the tradition of a male travel writer, Sally presents a sweeping visual mastery of the scene, a position Mary Louise Pratt has called the "monarch-of-all-I survey."¹⁹⁴ Sally wrote,

Below lies an extensive Country, embellished with all the Arts of civilized Life; whose Towns and Villages are now finely decorated by the mellow tints of an Autumnal Sun; which sheds a grand Sublimity over the scene which I am surrounded, and wakes every faculty of the Soul into a glow of enthusiastic Ardor.

¹⁹³ Burke, 96, 237.

¹⁹⁴ Pratt, 201.

All here is wild—wild, beyond the reach of Description; and great, beyond the grasp of Imagination. Nature, divested of the gaudy Decorations of Ornament (like the impetuous Efforts of a masterly Genius) has arrayed herself in terrific magnificence and sublimity. The gloomy grandeur of the Scene fills me with a degree of painful Astonishment. Above, Mountains seem heaped on Mountains; whose cloud-capt summits threaten, in proud defiance, even the Heavens themselves!¹⁹⁵

From her privileged position sitting in a lodge “on the highest pinnacle,” Sally commanded the vista (“Nature ... has arrayed herself”) thereby affirming her authority over the landscape. She framed the scene with picturesque elements. For instance, she began by situating a contrast between the valley settlements and the mountain backdrop. She also depicted a romantic mood suggested by the glow of an October sun (“mellow tints”). The sublime is expressed in her diction and gothic imagery (“all here is wild;” “gloomy grandeur;” “painful Astonishment”) as she portrayed the power and splendor of the natural landscape.

Sally, however, disrupts aesthetic conventions with creative interpolations of spiritual verse. In the October 11 passage, for instance, she inserted her own religious poetry after the picturesque frame but before the sublime description. The first verse presents the mountains from her Christian perspective as God’s creation:

Great God, how pow’rful is thy hand!
Thy Works, how great! How wise!
Low sink thee vales, at thy command—
The tow’ring mountains rise!¹⁹⁶

Sally’s melding of religious expression with the language of aesthetics imbues her depictions with political significance. As historian John Gatta notes, the intersection of nature and God has

¹⁹⁵ SAH, October 11, 1800, 184-185.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

long been a dominant theme in American literature. He further argues that the creation of national identity and purpose are intricately bound up with notions that the American landscape is sacred.¹⁹⁷ During the nineteenth century, according to Gatta, Americans compared the nation's forests to Old World places of worship, such as ancient Greek and Roman temples and medieval cathedrals. As such, Sally's addition of religious expression not only deviated from British tradition, but it gave her readers images of Pennsylvania's mountains with which they could identify.

Sally further departed from convention by bringing subjectivity to a traditionally objective discourse. According to Elizabeth Bohls, human figures in picturesque landscapes are "typically peripheral" and are included for "ornament."¹⁹⁸ In Sally's narrative, however, she is not merely an awed observer sitting from a position of privilege. She is a central element of the natural world. Her third and fourth stanzas reflect her personalization of the scene:

Thou dost my heaving Lungs inspire,
 Thou form'dst my beating heart;
 My Soul, this spark of heav'nly fire,
 Thy goodness did impart

Within, without, thy Wisdom bright,
 Thy Pow'r, thy Truth I prove:
 Nature displays thy works of Might;
 But Grace, thy works of Love.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ John Gatta, *Making Nature Sacred: Literature, Religion, and the Environment in America from the Puritans to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 4- 6.

¹⁹⁸ Bohls, 118.

¹⁹⁹ SAH, October 11, 1800, 185.

Sally viewed the wilderness romantically as a place for humans to interact with God. By this means, Sally tinkered with the universal, abstract paradigms of the picturesque and sublime. She interjected her own particular, real connection with the landscape. This rhetorical strategy reflects how genteel women travelers wove together virtue, piety, and republican values to create their own urbane, cultured identities.

Another later passage from Sally's narrative exemplifies her conflation of the sublime with real experience. This time she is on the top of the Third Mountain in Bedford enjoying a "delightful" picnic breakfast in the "Turkish Mode" after her family was forced to spend the night there during a storm. Her "Turkish" breakfast was a pivotal element of setting up this scene as genteel, as it drew upon the period's fashionable imitation of Turkish culture known as *turquerie*. Elite Anglo-Americans and Western Europeans, as historian Caroline Winterer notes, tended to view Eastern cultures as exotic and mysterious and became intensely interested in Turkish art, architecture, and music in the eighteenth century. They bedecked their homes in Turkish-inspired décor, furnishings, and art in a way that signaled an elevated social status.²⁰⁰ The Orientalist obsession among the genteel also included dressing in a Turkish fashion and emulating Turkish customs, including eating habits. Thus, Sally's allusion to fashionable genteel culture added to her picturesque scheme. As before, Sally disrupts the formulaic setting by inserting herself into the frame: "I, seated by the side of a Beautiful Spring, am alternately engaged in contemplating the surrounding Scenery, and in faintly sketching some of its leading Features," she wrote. Sally also destabilized the aesthetic description by commenting on the

²⁰⁰ Caroline Winterer, *The Mirror of Antiquity: American Women and the Classical Tradition, 1750-1900* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 7.

practicalities of frontier dining with a metaphor, “Our Forms and Carpets were of Nature’s manufacturing,” she informed her readers. And later, she meandered off the path into a “lonely Labyrinth” and “strayed from place to place, examining the Curiosities of Nature.”²⁰¹

In this description, she also presented an unconventional image of a woman enjoying the outdoors. Aware of the “impropriety” of her “Conduct,” Sally nevertheless, wandered away from the family domestic scene to explore nature. Romantically, Sally melded the sublime with patriotic allusions to liberty and freedom:

Here the Soul is uncommonly alive. Perhaps these are the Scenes for exalted Meditation; or the favorite haunts of the Muses: Or, it may be, as we approach nearer to the celestial Regions, the native element of Spirits, ours becomes more alert and invigorated; or perhaps, surrounded with sublime Objects, and those operating on the Senses, they communicate the most exalted Ideas to the Mind; which, exerting all its powers in the Contemplation of awful Nature, expands, until—bursting the Shackles which confine it to Earth, and asserting its native Prerogative and Independence—it rises, in a kind of enthusiastic Ardor, and contemplates the Perfections of Nature’s God!²⁰²

The conventional imagery, “the Soul is uncommonly alive;” “enthusiastic Ardor;” and “bursting the Shackles,” illustrates Sally’s strong physical response to the mountainview. But, it also captures how some women experienced a strong sense of spiritual, physical, and intellectual freedom in nature.

This aesthetic mediation of the natural landscape, although personalized, dehistoricized westward settlement. As historian Brigitte Georgi-Findlay argues, women’s narrative imaginings of the West were often contradictory. Although women had different perspectives on the frontier, their portrayals reinforced national mythology that the West was an uninhabited and

²⁰¹ SAH, October 12, 1800, 189.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

empty landscape.²⁰³ In particular, Sally, like most other women travelers from the same period, leaves out the presence of American Indians in virtually all of her descriptions of the natural surroundings.²⁰⁴ The one exception occurs as the end of her narrative, in Washington County. She employs the sublime to interpret the violence between native peoples and white settlers. Upon reaching Washington County on October 30, Sally brings attention to the real trauma that occurred at the site of the local “Seminary of Learning,” Canonsburg Academy (reconstituted as Jefferson College in 1802) with a picturesque scene of sublime terror (see fig. 15). This “spot,” Sally exclaimed, “was the unhallowed Haunt of Savages; the scene of Desolation, Bloodshed, and Horror!”—a reference to Indian attacks on white settlements in the 1780s.²⁰⁵ In language that echoes gothic novels, Sally disowns Indian displacement by reconfiguring the landscape as a site of civilization embodied in the built landscape (“Seminary of Learning”).

²⁰³ Georgi-Findlay, 41.

²⁰⁴ Imbarrato, 14.

²⁰⁵ SAH, October 30, 1800, 207.



Figure 15. Photograph of Canonsburg Academy.

This photograph depicts the stone building of Canonsburg Academy, constructed in 1796 by John Canon (bef. 1773-1798). Canonsburg Academy, a Presbyterian seminary incorporated in 1791, was originally founded to “prepare young men for the Gospel Ministry.” Helen Turnbull Waite Coleman, *Banners in the Wilderness: Early Years of Washington and Jefferson College* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1956), 45. *Image Source:* By unknown. Canonsburg’s Historical Markers, Public Domain, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10622837>.

In Sally's discussion of nature, the native inhabitants of the Pennsylvania backcountry are relegated to a romantic past. Thus when Sally commented on the Indians, she used gothic imagery that portrays them as exotic, ignoble savage others connected to an uncivilized land.

For example, Sally punctuated her October 30th description with the following poem:

Now, where fierce Monsters rent their trembling prey,
 And yelling Savages, more fierce than they,
 With blazing Victims dimn'd the dazzling Noon,
 And midnight carnage shock'd the trembling Moon;
 Where Indian arrows drank the vital breath,
 And mangled Captives invocated Death;
 Where the fell Tomahawk, and Scalping-knife,
 Dispatch'd the tender Husband and the Wife;
 Where shudd'ring Parents, agonizing stood,
 Besmear'd with their own Offspring's brains and blood;
 For rites accurs'd th' unhallowed Altar pil'd,
 On which their unsuspecting Infants smil'd;
 Torture'd, beheld 'in all the Death of Woe,'
 This impious Off'ring to the Shades below!
 Where purple Chiefs rejoic'd in Feasts of Blood,
 Strangers to Nature's Ties, and Nature's God—
 Now the bright Son's kind healing wing's expand,
 And holy Temples consecrated stand;
 Now shines the glorious Gospel from above,
 And all is Peace, and Harmony, and Love.²⁰⁶

Of particular interest, Sally invokes Christian millennial visions in the last four lines of the poem. The “fierce Monsters” described as “Strangers to Nature's Ties” and “Nature's God” are gone from the site. In its place, “holy Temples,” human additions to the landscape, now stand. By using aesthetic language, Sally distanced herself from the historical reality of Euro-American conquest and contributed to a reimagining of American Indians as relics of the past. By recalling

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

the violent imagery of captivity narratives, Sally significantly ties Pennsylvania to the nation's larger mythologies of its founding and development.

In this chapter, I explored Sally's interpretations of her outdoor natural surroundings. Her narrative shows us that the creation of images of the American landscape was hardly limited to male writers. However, Sally's representations are paradoxical, as she struggled to reconcile gendered expectations regarding domesticity with traveling and writing. In this manner, her physical journey was also a metaphor for personal self-discovery that imparted a mixture of realism and romance to her readers. The next chapter builds on Sally's reactions to the frontier environment by going inside public houses and observing backcountry social life.

Chapter Three: Social Crossings: Innkeepers, Drunkards, and Militiamen

Autumn in the southwestern Allegheny Mountains is unpredictable. Some years, heavy snow blankets the region in October. Other years, warm temperatures linger into late fall—a phenomenon that the locals call “Indian Summer.”²⁰⁷ It was one of those milder, clear days that favored the mountains in the village of Strasburg on the morning of October 11, 1800. Near the base of the Kittatinny,²⁰⁸ a handsome group of soldiers performed drills amid the stately pines—unaware that Sally Hastings was admiring them from her seat in the village inn above them.²⁰⁹ The display of order and traditional masculinity in the forest provided a flash of pleasure for the

²⁰⁷ SAH, October 11, 1800, 183-184; SAH, October 11, 1800, 183-184. The village of Strasburg is present-day Upper Strasburg Township, Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Adam W. Sweeting, *Beneath the Second Sun: A Cultural History of Indian Summer* (Lebanon, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2003), 14. The term “Indian Summer” is most often used in the northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of North America. It refers to a period of relatively warm weather in late autumn that usually follows a frost or a freeze. No definitive explanation for the term’s origin exists. However, the earliest known written reference to the expression is found in a 1770s essay by J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, author of *Letters to An American Farmer* (1782). Dr. Benjamin Rush observed and kept notes about Pennsylvania’s climatology from 1789 to 1805. He wrote about the variableness of Pennsylvania’s weather, “no two successive seasons are alike, and even the same months differ from each other in different years. There is but one steady trait, and that is, it is uniformly variable.” Quoted in *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner Beers & Co., 1887), 140.

²⁰⁸ The Kittatinny Mountains, also referred to as the Blue Mountains, are an extension of the Ridge and Valley Province of the Allegheny Mountains. The ridge extends from near the Hudson River in New York through the northwestern portion of New Jersey and south into central Pennsylvania.

²⁰⁹ SAH, October 11, 1800, 184. In her description of the mountain top view, Sally picturesquely noted that a low “Autumnal sun” cast “mellow tints” upon the town of Strasburg. Sally’s location is also known as “North Mountain,” near present-day Upper Strasburg (see note 206).

travel-weary Sally. With her pen, she mused, "... the military evolutions of a Brigade of well-disciplined Soldiers . . . appears to me, an Exercise calculated to display the manly graces of a finely-proportioned Figure, [better] than the most approved Country-dance I ever saw." For a genteel young woman like Sally, the precise back and forth movements of the drilling soldiers most likely recalled the rhythmic lines of a proper minuet. She was both entertained and morally inspired. "In its nature, it [the exercise] seems to combine so much of the Elegant and Useful," she added. Her pleased response suggests a desire to make a connection between the East and the West—a connection that also reveals early national sensibilities concerning gender, class, and place, in addition to safety and order.²¹⁰

Sally's observation about the soldiers is but one example in her narrative providing valuable evidence regarding backcountry culture in the opening decade of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, her narrative corroborates arguments made by numerous historians that the militia played a significant role in building national identity at a time when Americans saw themselves through regional lenses. The showy parades, drills, and musters Sally describes, according to scholars, brought townspeople together to socialize, politick, and celebrate. Ricardo A. Herrera notes, militia demonstrations "answered a public desire for dramatic public spectacle" that gave Americans shared experiences.²¹¹ Harry S. Laver further points out how these

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ricardo A. Herrera, *For Liberty and the Republic: The American Citizen as Soldier, 1775-1861* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 67. See also David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, 1997), 156. Waldstreicher explains, "National Character" in the early republic was a means of understanding citizenship. Within this ideology, the state could be "anthropomorphized into an individual with a body, a psychology, and a reputation in the world." Political crises of the late 1790s prompted and validated the formation and reformation of volunteer militia companies. These groups would meet regularly and parade on

activities brought stability to frontier communities by reinforcing conventional social hierarchies, including class, race, and gender. “Order and deference,” he writes, “were as much a part of militia events as uniforms and muskets.”²¹² Yet, more often than not, as this chapter will demonstrate, the soldiers in Sally’s narrative are depicted paradoxically as both *keepers* and *breakers* of the peace.

As a “genteel traveler,” Sally viewed the social and material landscape of the Early Republican backcountry with ambiguity. It is important to remember that Sally’s narrator is a construction. She was keenly aware that she was stepping into spaces (as both a traveler and a writer) that were not normally viewed as feminine. Hence, her literary voice reflects the values and practices of polite sensibility and virtuous republican womanhood (even as the realities of her failed marriage contradict them) that would be acceptable to her readers. As we will see, Sally reacted with a conflicted mixture of dismay and admiration when confronted with more pluralistic and rustic backcountry residents. She simultaneously imposed genteel values of prescribed domesticity on the new environment while questioning the veracity of such standards. In this regard, Sally’s narrative tells us as much about middling- and upper-class values and ideals as it does about backcountry traveling and social conditions.²¹³ Throughout her story, she

festival days. Waldstreicher notes that the “militia typified the Revolutionary struggle to locate and personify ‘the people.’” He also argues that militia service gave lower class men claims to citizenship—well into the nineteenth century.

²¹² Henry S. Laver, *Citizens More than Soldiers: The Kentucky Militia and Society in the Early Republic* (Lincoln, NE: The University of Nebraska, 2007), 3.

²¹³ Sally makes little to no comment on race or ethnicity in her narrative. She makes one reference to regional identity (“Yankees”), p.91; and one reference to American Indians, p.207.

provides important descriptions of backcountry social interaction that give a rare glimpse at how women contributed to gender construction at this transitional time.

This chapter uses Sally's experiences with public house culture to examine the tensions between early Republican ideals and women's actual experiences. I begin with a brief look at the role of public houses in the backcountry. I follow this section with an analysis of the interplay between Sally's constructed gentility and her assessment of the practicalities of lodging in public houses. Then, I explore Sally's responses to frontier sociability by looking at domesticity and entertainment in the public houses. With my examination, I argue that Sally's text can be viewed as a subversive critique of American republican society. On the surface, her close attention to the region's cultural and social spaces seems to align well with prescribed gender ideals that stressed domesticity for women. She certainly *appears* to be upholding republican motherhood by modeling genteel womanly behavior in spite of the more rustic conditions. Yet, as Sally gave her opinions on backcountry culture, she also transgressed norms that discouraged women's public voice. Significantly, her narrative helped to shape conceptions about frontier life and shows how issues of identity were in flux at this time.

“Comfortable Supper, Excellent Lodging, and Calm Refreshing Sleep”

In March of 1801, as the dust settled from the rancorously divisive 1800 presidential election, travelers continued to stream across Pennsylvania's backcountry. Some travelers, mostly men, were passing through to conduct trade or hunt for land in the nation's interior. Others were migrants, including women and children, looking to resettle. Only four days after Jefferson's inauguration, an advertisement appeared in the March 16th edition of Washington County's *Herald of Liberty* announcing the opening of a “house of entertainment or Inn” in the

center of the village of Washington “next door to the Sheriff’s Office” on Chestnut Street. The enterprising innkeeper more than likely saw a business opportunity in the many travelers who came through the town on their way south and west. Notably, as the advertisement makes clear, the innkeeper refused to limit his offerings to just male patrons as “he flatters himself in being able to give satisfaction to all travelers as well as Citizens.” In keeping with assumed gender expectations, the business owner seemed to appeal to both sexes when he promised to render “his best services” by providing not only “the best Liquors,” but “large and commodious” rooms, an extra luxury that presumably women would find especially desirable.²¹⁴

Public houses like the one in this ad were vital civic institutions in the trans-Allegheny region. Scholars have shown how the public and the private intersected in multiple ways in taverns and inns. They provided food and entertainment for visitors and locals, as well as shelter for travelers. According to historian Christine Sismondo, from the beginning of white settlement in the seventeenth century, the establishment of public houses was “the first priority.” As hubs of communication, they served as courthouses, post offices, town halls, as well as community centers for news and socializing. But, as Sismondo points out, their most important function was to accommodate travelers by offering them meals, food for their horses, a place to sleep or rest, and shelter from inclement weather.²¹⁵ In the backcountry, inns and taverns increasingly dotted

²¹⁴ “Advertisement,” *Herald of Liberty*, Washington, Pennsylvania, March 16, 1801, in *America’s Historical Newspapers*, (accessed November 26, 2016), <http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu>.

²¹⁵ Christine Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar: A Spirited History of Taverns and Saloons, Speakeasies and Grog Shops* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5. For tavern history, also see Sharon V. Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking in Early America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2002).

popular stage routes and public roads and quickly popped up in the center of newly developing towns.²¹⁶ Although men had been the primary patrons of public houses in colonial times, in the Early Republic, more women travelers, as the Washington County innkeeper's advertisement suggests, were stepping into these establishments.²¹⁷

Pennsylvania's public houses, in particular, were socially blended spaces where people of various group identities gathered and interacted. Well-known for its ethnic and religious pluralism, Pennsylvania boasted a population that came from a number of different European groups, such as German, Welsh, Irish, Scottish, and Dutch, as well as people of African descent. As a result, many social groups with varied cultural identities, as well as different class statuses mingled with each other in the region's inns and taverns.²¹⁸ One can imagine the new and interesting social situations that developed in the course of these meetings. David S. Shields further observes that a marked fluidity created a dynamic public house atmosphere, as "new faces continually appeared and disappeared."²¹⁹ Increasingly, women took part in this lively

²¹⁶ See Salinger's *Taverns and Drinking*.

²¹⁷ Imbarrato, 56.

²¹⁸ Gavin R. Nathan, *Historic Taverns of Boston: 370 Years of Tavern History in One Definitive Guide* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), 3-5. A note about the terminology: in seventeenth-century Boston, taverns were called "ordinaries," after their English counterparts where meals were served with unlimited ale at a fixed price. By the eighteenth-century, as ordinaries became more regulated, people also began referring to them as "taverns." "Inns" or "public houses" were built specifically for travelers. The public houses later became "hotels" in response to the development of tourist travel and to accommodate wealthier patrons.

²¹⁹ David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 31.

interaction as lodgers and diners, and as Susan Imbarrato argues, they importantly “became part of the larger transference of culture and news” that occurred in these mixed spaces.²²⁰

Traveling in 1800, Sally participated in this dynamic cultural exchange in the Pennsylvania backcountry. A part of the new vanguard of women travelers, she patronized several inns and public houses on her journey. For Sally, access to spaces that were at once public and private proved to be an unpredictable and destabilizing enterprise. There are times in her narrative when she “enjoyed the Blessings of a Comfortable Supper, excellent Lodging, and calm refreshing Sleep.”²²¹ However, rudimentary conditions and less than accommodating service characterize many of her other narrated experiences, illuminating the class tensions between visitors from the east and backcountry inhabitants. The following section looks at how typical public house situations, such as small and crowded spaces, lack of privacy, sparsely-furnished rooms, and inhospitable proprietors challenged Sally’s notions of ideal republican domesticity.

“This House with all its Furniture”

Because the private and public spheres overlapped in taverns and inns, they were appropriate settings to test genteel domesticity. These fluid social boundaries mirrored a similar muddling of the public and private in early national conceptions of the “home.” As noted earlier, the main purpose of an inn or public house is to provide the basic necessities of human survival to travelers—food and shelter. In this way, it becomes a surrogate “home,” traditionally a

²²⁰ Imbarrato, 56.

²²¹ SAH, October 9, 1800, 179.

domestic space and main purview of women. In the Early Republic, however, “home” encapsulated more than a physical place of shelter for the family. It had evolved into an ideological space whereby women were supposed to cultivate happiness and create refined havens of domestic tranquility and social order.²²² As the following extracted lines from a poem Sally wrote on the subject also suggest, this re-conceptualized version of home became linked to a rising middle-class consumption culture:

Domestic joys, she studies to increase,
And each domestic sorrow to redress.

With still more glowing charms, a cultur'd mind:
She makes her household goods her pleasing care,
And builds, of happiness, the temple there.²²³

It only seems logical that Sally would apply this shifting domestic ideal, one in which gender, class, moral values, and materialism were intertwined, to the backcountry's quasi-domestic spaces. Thus, although travel itself was considered a masculine endeavor, women were central to the social and cultural exchange that occurred on the road.

Like other travel writers, Sally used a comparative approach in making her evaluations of public houses and their proprietors. In assessing a particular inn, she looked for genteel refinement comparable to what would be found in the East. She evaluated furnishings; the size

²²² For studies on the development of this ideal, see Lucia McMahon, *Mere Equals* and Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash*.

²²³ SAH, “To Lucinda,” 100. T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford University Press, 2004), xvii. Historians such as T.H. Breen have shown how a “marketplace revolution” in the eighteenth century transformed American society by giving “middling sorts of people” access to an array of material goods that were used to add beauty and comfort to their living spaces.

and physical layout of the establishment; cleanliness and material amenities such as food and heat, and the hospitability of the proprietors. Then, she judged those assessments against idealized notions of republican gentility. At times, the commentary is followed with implied or explicit remarks on the proprietors' innate qualities using the language of genteel sensibility. For example, genteel proprietors are positively described as "cordial," "benevolent," "smart," and "respectful." Non-genteel proprietors, on the other hand, are characterized in negative terms, such as "repulsive," "despotic," and "supercilious." As previously discussed, early national Americans infused gentility with republican values of citizenship and morality. They believed that refinement and taste, the hallmarks of gentility, could be *learned* thereby connecting to commonly-held American values of progress and upward mobility. The "proper" genteel display of behavior and material objects subsequently revealed individual character traits, in addition to social status.²²⁴

Therein, resides some of gentility's paradoxes. This "shared aesthetic sensibility," according to Catherine E. Kelly, linked "like-minded individuals" at a time when Americans struggled with issues of national identity in a pluralistic society. However, as Kelly notes, such evaluations produced a "Janus-faced" culture.²²⁵ On the one hand, genteel self-presentation felt exclusionary and restrictive. As Marion Rust notes, gentility "narrowed horizons" for both genteel aspirants and the increasingly penalized lower sorts, such as rustic backcountry inhabitants.²²⁶ On the other hand, gentility affirmed a deep-seated American belief in individual

²²⁴Carson, 521-522.

²²⁵Kelly, *Republic of Taste*, 2, 6.

²²⁶ Marion Rust, *Prodigal Daughters: Susanna Rowson's Early American Women* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 106.

possibility. While gentility allowed for harsh criticism of other people's characters and appearances, it also opened "unofficial" doors of national identity for literate Anglo-American women denied formal civil rights. In performing gentility, Sally exemplified good citizenship that also incongruously established social divisions.²²⁷

During the eighteenth century, a growing tide of consumerism in American society signaled new ideas about class and identity.²²⁸ Genteel families residing in the more established areas in the East lived in homes abounding with fashionable domestic objects that were linked to sociability and performance, such as tea sets, chairs, cups, plates, and utensils. By the mid-eighteenth century, according to historian Cary Carson, lower- and middling-class Americans joined the upper classes in buying these more "specialized" goods in which each person had his or her own matching piece. This change is significant, according to Carson, because it shows how the intrinsic worth of artifacts became less important than their social value.²²⁹ In other words, Americans were now personalizing material objects and investing them with cultural meaning.

²²⁷ Rust, 51-56. Rust argues that this early Republic emphasis on individual and political self-determination cannot be overemphasized as a culturally significant shift in worldview. She points out the divergence of this ideal from earlier Calvinist doctrines of original sin and human being's innate depravity. The Lockean idea that human beings can correct themselves and improve, however, does have an ominous obverse—the possibility for regression. This latter possibility had significant import for women and the prescriptions requiring them to remain sexually pure and virtuous.

²²⁸ For an analysis of the connections between consumerism and American republicanism, see T.H. Breen's *The Marketplace of Revolution*.

²²⁹ Carson, 487-506; 522-530.

In this regard, one of the first features Sally assesses about her lodgings is interior material display. One example in Sally's narrative, a public house in present-day Huntingdon County stands out as she explicitly deemed it to be "a very genteel private Lodging." Moreover, her description indicates that *how* such objects were displayed was just as important as having them. "This house, with all its Furniture, exhibits the most pleasing emblem of Industry, Neatness, and Economy," Sally admiringly wrote. Although it is not possible to determine exactly what the furniture looked like in this particular inn, Sally's comment here is revealing in several ways. Backcountry furniture often exhibits regional variations and stylistic attributes corresponding to ethnicity and a desire to hybridize different local and Euro-American traditions.²³⁰ From Sally's comments, however, we can presume that this public house was furnished with matching sets of upholstered chairs and tables constructed in a more fashionable mode.²³¹

Sally's description ("neatness" and "economy") further suggests the clean, simple lines of neoclassical designs which eschewed ornate and heavy carving. As historian Kevin Sweeney notes, late eighteenth-century genteel Americans prized neoclassical simplicity as a reflection of taste and refinement. After the Revolution, this simplicity also took on moral value as it became

²³⁰ Ann Smart Martin, *Buying into the World of Goods: Early Consumers in Backcountry Virginia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 108.

²³¹ Carson, 565-566. These elements, as Carson has established, were significant components of genteel display. Carson further notes that regional artisans, such as would be found in the backcountry, frequently copied popular transatlantic furniture designs and styles, so that even "lowly" pieces could look fashionable.

associated with republican virtue and restraint.²³² Sally's positive assessment of her lodging's inhabitants as possessing "native Simplicity" which gave her "Evidence" that the innkeepers possessed "a warm and benevolent Heart" upholds these sentiments.²³³

In addition, Sally's observations expose two important points about both the traveler and the backcountry inhabitants. They show that Sally considered a well-ordered and well-furnished home to be genteel; her observations further suggest that, in this case, the frontier proprietors also aspired to gentility.²³⁴ This second point illuminates the complicated relationship between frontier society and eastern seaboard norms. Most of the residents in the trans-Allegheny region at this time were farmers, poor laborers, and domestic servants. A great economic disparity existed between the poorest residents, who lived in the rugged mountain areas, and the more well-to-do residents who lived in the fertile valleys. Yet, even the more prosperous residents often lived in fairly primitive conditions, shunning much of the material culture that outsiders would recognize and value as signs of wealth.

Sally McMurry explains how backcountry settlers had a "tenuous relationship" with the "wider metropolitan culture." McMurray attributes this ambivalence in part to geography and the vast distances separating the region from the East, which limited contact with the dominant outside culture. However, she also asserts that backcountry residents consciously accepted some customs and norms while rejecting others. In other words, genteel values just did not match the

²³² Kevin M. Sweeney, "High-Style Vernacular: Lifestyles of the Colonial Elite in *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1994), 57.

²³³ SAH, October, 12, 189.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

reality of their lives. Ann Smart Martin further argues that backcountry society was “linked vertically (high and low) and horizontally (through community, ethnicity, and religion).” Ethnicity and religion, therefore, frequently dictated social and cultural norms rather than “professed standards of living.”²³⁵ That being said, some backcountry people, such as the innkeepers in this example, did aspire to refinement, or at least desired to perform it for their guests.²³⁶ The proprietors here, similar to their urban counterparts, may have been using inn-keeping as a means to establish social status within the community.²³⁷

A dynamic transatlantic trade boosted the availability of material goods to the backcountry. Western Pennsylvania was a shipping gateway that linked trade from the eastern seaboard to interior and southern sections of the nation. Sally disparagingly remarked to her readers that Washington County’s “principal Trade being to Neworleans” was a “particularly unfavorable” aspect of town life.²³⁸ Luxury goods from Britain and Europe, as well as the Caribbean, flowed into the frontier via Pennsylvania’s waterways and roadways and could be found in backcountry stores. Many interior towns, such as Carlisle in Cumberland County, were

²³⁵ Martin, 95.

²³⁶ McMurry, 2, 7-9.

²³⁷ Kym S. Rice, in *Early American Taverns: For the Entertainment of Friends and Strangers* (Chicago: Regnery Publishers, 1983), 31-32. Rice also finds that many urban tavern keepers “dropped the occupation” after they achieved the desired economic and class standing.

²³⁸ SAH, October 30, 1800, 207. She further remarks here “the Influence of those Southern Climes on Northern Constitutions,” a reflection of popular eighteenth-century attitudes regarding environment and the human condition. It was believed that temperate climates were healthier, especially for those of European descent. Whereas, warmer, more humid regions were unhealthy; those living in these areas were not only more prone to disease, but they were more likely to be indolent and languid.

deliberately planned as commercial exchange centers and shaped by transatlantic trade. As a result, according to Ridner, merchants, tradesmen, and storekeepers were among Carlisle's earliest inhabitants and helped make the town an important way station for the colonial fur trade. By 1800, the fur trade was gone, but the town adapted to new market demands and became a more "economically diverse commercial and cultural crossroads" servicing the mid-Atlantic area.²³⁹

Early national backcountry retailers, artisans, and store keepers linked the interior to the larger cosmopolitan culture. Ridner notes that European products and metropolitan goods "loomed particularly large" in the postwar frontier economy and became important selling points for stores.²⁴⁰ Store owners and their inventories, Martin argues, illuminate the "hybridized" and dynamic situation that marked backcountry markets and show how local economies were enmeshed in the larger Atlantic world.²⁴¹ A list of imported products for sale at George Dawson's shop in Carlisle, for example, illustrates the region's connections to faraway places, including Europe, the Caribbean, the British Isles, and Asia, that complicate our understanding of backcountry living. The advertisement, which appeared in the September 10, 1800, edition of *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, includes luxuries from household goods to beauty products to foodstuffs:

Best Port wine in wood and bottles, Sherry Lisbon, Malaga, and Teneriff wines, best wine vinegar, porter in bottles, French brandy, Jamaica spirits, Holland gin, American gin, old rye whiskey, apple brandy, molasses, best green coffee, sugars of every description, imperial, young hyson, fine hyson, souchong, hyson skin and bobea teas,

²³⁹ Ridner, 65, 160-162.

²⁴⁰ Ridner, 165.

²⁴¹ Martin, 6-7.

chocolate, paint oil, lamp oil, candles, salted fish, course and fine salt, juniper berries, glass, china and queens ware, tobacco, rappee and scotch snuff, Spanish segars, imported fruits, paints, perfumery, hair-powder, pomatum, French and Spanish indigo, blackball, rifle powder, shot and lead, etc. which he will sell cheap at this store, second door from Mr. Foster's tavern for cash or country produce.²⁴²

The products for sale at this store, a mix of food products and objects, gives us a glimpse into backcountry living. Customers still needed staples, such as salt, coffee, molasses, and chocolate. As Martin notes, these items were used to preserve foods and in baking. The teas from Asia, on the other hand, illustrate the connections between foodstuffs and sociability and a desire for specialized products. Dawson's offering of material goods, such as the china and "queensware;" perfumes; and hair pomades; most likely from Britain and France, also point to customers concerned with fashion and taste.²⁴³ Backcountry people, as historians such as Ridner, Martin, and Wagner have shown, had access to the trappings that made everyday living more comfortable and nice. At an inn in Somerset County, for example, Sally was particularly impressed by the genteel cuisine ("excellent Fare") stating that they were "accommodated with every Luxury that the most abject Epicure could desire."²⁴⁴ Although the region was very rural, it was also a socially fluid space characterized by mobility. As travelers (like Sally and her family) traversed, settled, and worked in the region, they brought their cultural tastes and values with them.

²⁴² Advertisement, *Carlisle Gazette*, published as *Kline's Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, Carlisle, Pa., September 10, 1800, America's Historical Newspapers, accessed November 27, 1800 <http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu>.

²⁴³ Martin, 84.

²⁴⁴ SAH, October 21, 1800, 193.

Sally's sensibilities were informed by material culture. She lamented the more modestly outfitted public houses, signaling a destabilization of genteel ideals. Their lodging at the foot of Ray's Hill in Bedford County typified such a space with the entirety of its furnishings consisting of, according to Sally, "Two sorry beds, an equal number of Chairs, and some Benches, with the addition of two Wheels...." The negative tone and the fact that Sally pointed out the "terrific Wildness" of the area in her description leads to a logical inference that this establishment was not refined. Although she experienced many "Difficulties" with the rustic accommodations, she did express gratitude for "all the Comforts our situation will admit; among which, a clean Room and a cheering Fire" were most important.²⁴⁵ This begrudging concession to frontier culture allows us to see how travel forced Sally to reassess her notions regarding her physical environment. Her narrative reveals the complicated negotiations that occurred between a woman traveler and her readers in depicting frontier experiences, indicating the conflicts travel and writing presented to genteel women.

Sally's narrative ambivalently engaged with the wider socioeconomic tensions between the East and the West present in early national life. These negotiations, in some cases, were at odds with Jeffersonian ideals promoting westward settlement as an agrarian idyll. As we have seen, some residents experienced subsistent living standards and had few material goods. These conditions evinced sharp critical commentary from Sally. For example, upon entering the mountain region of Franklin County, as noted earlier, Sally declared that they had now passed "the frontiers of Refinement." In other words, the sights and sounds of the material world as displayed in the natural and built landscape no longer reflected her ideas of taste and civility.

²⁴⁵ SAH, October 15, 1800, 191-192.

She supported this conclusion by stating that the “the Land is poor, and the generality of the Houses are but Huts.”²⁴⁶ Such criticism not only conflicted with genteel notions of cultivated civilization, but it also called into question male visions of the West as a land of economic opportunity.

Other times, Sally sustained these twin ideals by portraying parts of the region as an earthly Eden. As Georgi-Findlay argues, white women travelers’ narrative voices tend to be conflicted because they were “positioned ambiguously within the relations of power and authority.” Yet, by pastoralizing of the frontier, women also contributed to national mythmaking and affirmed ideas of empire building.²⁴⁷ The valley in Huntingdon County, for example, according to Sally was “very fertile” with “Soil ... excellent for Pasturage.” Sally further observed from a window seat in her apartment at the inn “upwards of forty large Cheeses ripening.” Likewise, the prosperous valley areas of Somerset and Westmoreland Counties are characterized as places of “luxurious Plenty” in “perfect Cultivation” with “delightful Gardens” and “warm” and “decent” houses in her narrative. Sally’s contrasting viewpoints on frontier material culture and fertile agrarian life reveals economic disparity in Pennsylvania’s backcountry and illuminates women’s more conflicted views of westward settlement.²⁴⁸

Another feature Sally notices in her evaluations of public houses refers to their physical size and interior layouts. Sally grew up in a large two-story stone house with clearly defined

²⁴⁶ SAH, October 10, 1800, 182.

²⁴⁷ Georgi-Findlay, 9-12.

²⁴⁸ SAH, 186, 190, 193, 199.

formal and informal spaces, in addition to separate living and sleeping areas.²⁴⁹ Such standards of spatial division and order, as Richard Bushman notes, were common in even the most middling of mid-Atlantic gentry houses.²⁵⁰ There were some backcountry inns that would have offered similarly refined accommodations. An advertisement in the *Carlisle Gazette* published January 24, 1806, for example, announced the sale of a public house in the center of Newville, a town west of Carlisle in Cumberland County described as “a large and elegant Stone House with four Rooms on a floor, a Stone Kitchen, the whole completely finished, with necessary out buildings.” Most backcountry inns, however, were simply constructed one or two room log houses. The barroom, dining room, and sleeping areas were usually combined in one or two larger areas with little to no internal divisions between the spaces.²⁵¹ According to Judith Ridner, these simple, rustic accommodations were a reflection of poor economic realities as some townspeople opened up their own homes as taverns to earn income in order to survive. This aspect distinguished rural public houses from their urban counterparts, as city taverns were not usually operated out of the proprietors’ homes.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ “PHMC Cultural Resources Database,” *Philadelphiabuildings.org*, Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, 2017, accessed January 1, 2017, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/phmc_display.cfm?KeyNo=082276. The Clark farm, Sally’s childhood home, is still located in East Donegal Township, Lancaster County, just east of Sally’s Maytown home. The farmhouse is a brick and stone two-story, five-bay building that was constructed around 1763.

²⁵⁰ Bushman, 116.

²⁵¹ Paton, Yoder, “The American Inn, 1775-1850: Melting Pot or Stewing Kettle?” *Indiana Magazine of History*, 1, Jun. 1963.

²⁵² Ridner, 66; Rice, 31. Rice notes that although city tavern keepers most likely lived and worked in the taverns, they rarely were the owners of the buildings.

Regardless of the inn's size and spatial layout, it was a multi-functional building. This fact meant travelers shared common dining and entertainment areas, in addition to sleeping quarters. Crowded conditions and economics usually mandated the sharing of beds, as well as improvisation in other ways to get some rest.²⁵³ According to Sally, at an inn west of Fort Littleton, "a large and very jolly Company" had already "engaged every Bed and Bedchamber in the House." As a result, Sally and her family were "reduced to the disagreeable Necessity of sleeping on Chairs, Benches, or any other way" in the common entertainment area. In recounting the episode, Sally humorously told her readers that the other lodgers' dull road stories lulled her into "the most slumberous attitude."²⁵⁴ As this example suggests, the communal nature of public houses provided new and unusual experiences for the genteel woman traveler.

The more open spaces (physical and social) of public houses unbalanced genteel notions of social harmony by temporarily suspending traditional class hierarchies. As Sally noted in regards to the aforementioned Bedford inn, "The House in which we lodged is small, and has only one habitable Apartment." The one-room, communal space required shared sleeping arrangements, underscoring the conflict between Sally's notions of privacy and backcountry norms. She complained, "All the Landlord's Family, which was not small and ours, were promiscuously blended together."²⁵⁵ Imbarrato tells us that sharing beds was practical and

²⁵³ Imbarrato, 61. Imbarrato states that the average tavern had six to eight beds, enough to accommodate twelve to sixteen men; larger inns might be able to accommodate up to thirty travelers at one time (61).

²⁵⁴ SAH, October 13, 1800, 190.

²⁵⁵ SAH, October 15, 1800, 191.

common in many public houses.²⁵⁶ Sally's comments, then, are telling in that they reveal sociable ideas about appropriate social interaction. As Lucia McMahon explains, women, in particular, "sought to maintain class cohesion, political stability, and personal enjoyment" by cultivating relationships within their same socioeconomic circles.²⁵⁷ Sleeping with the backcountry inhabitants contravened this genteel concept of social order.

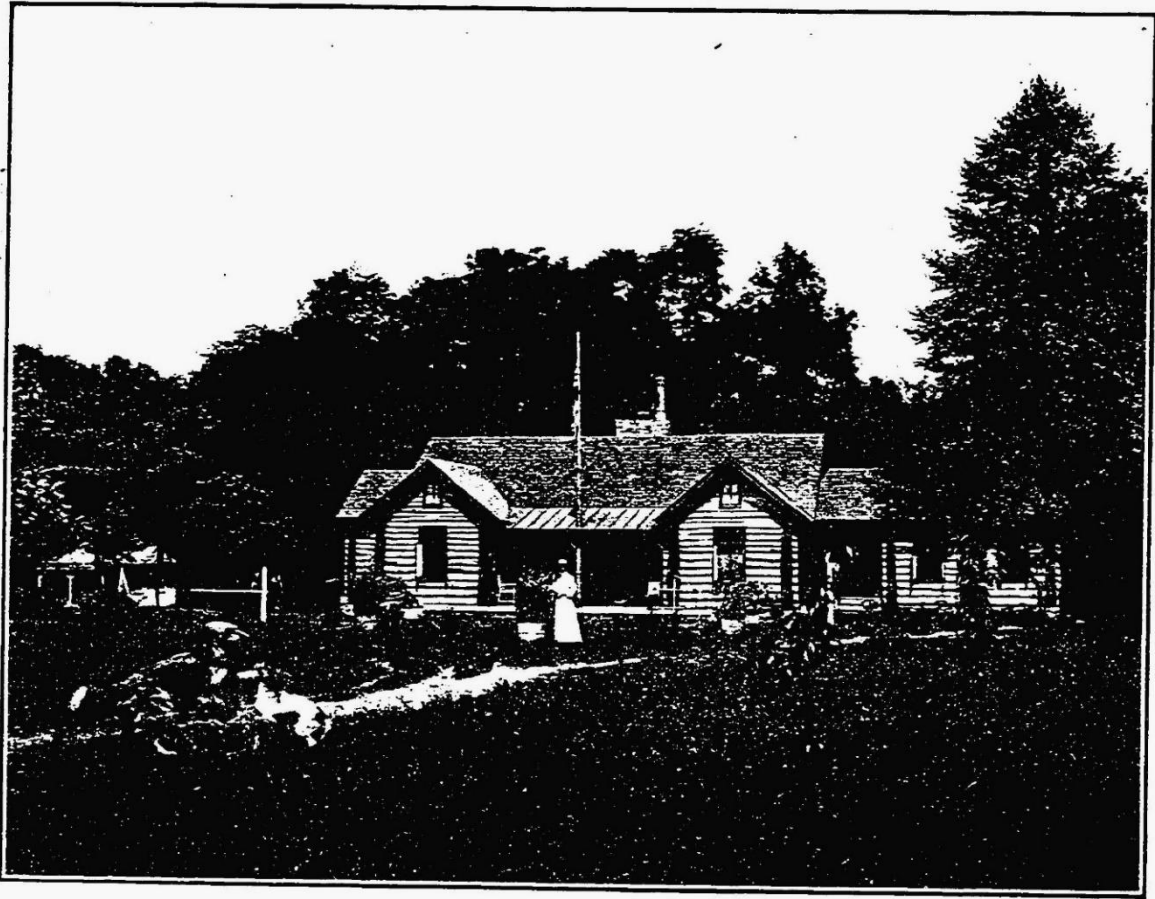
Sally's description of a public house later in the narrative provides striking imagery that further testifies to this tension. Upon arriving at Mountain Spring Lodge, an inn in Laughlintown, near Ligonier on October 23, Sally and her family discovered an establishment "full of Men of Savage appearance, in an outlandish dress" (see fig. 16 for a photograph of this public house). After professing "Perplexity and Terror" at the uncertain situation, she provided a description of the communal nature of the space:

One large, unfinished, and unfurnished Room, with a Kitchen of equal dimensions, composed the whole of this Building. Both the Apartments were enlivened by an exhilarating Fire; round which sat upwards of twenty Persons, engaged in different scenes of the most turbulent Merriment...Our arrival produced a momentary Calm...and... [with] cheerful readiness procured us Seats round the Fire.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Imbarrato, 63.

²⁵⁷ McMahon, 84.

²⁵⁸ SAH, October 23, 1800, 196.



MOUNTAIN SPRING LODGE,
Summer Residence, near Ligonier, of Mr. James M. Shields, of Pittsburgh.

Figure 16. Photograph of Mountain Spring Lodge, Laughlintown, Pa.

The description that appears with this image states that "Sallie Hastings" stayed here on October 23 1800, and that this building is the "same one." It also notes that the innkeeper in 1800 was Benjamin Johnston, who did not receive a license to sell liquor until 1808. *Source:* John N. Boucher, *History of Westmoreland County, Vol 1* (New York: The Lewis Printing Company, 1906), 590.

It turns out that the men with whom they interacted were hunters (most likely garbed in hunting shirts and animal skin hats). While Sally's expression of ambivalence ("Perplexity" and "Terror") illustrates how costume, in this case the men's "outlandish dress," signaled class difference, her remarks also reveal the incongruity of the circumstances whereby a genteel family socialized with frontier hunters, highlighting the breakdown of traditional class barriers. The next section further explores the tensions between genteel codes of behavior and public house culture.

"Disturbed by the Noise of an Intoxicated Gentleman"

Public houses throughout the nation served as significant sites for the intersection of drinking and lively entertainment. As Susan V. Salinger notes, "the fundamental role" of a public house was to give people a place to "eat and drink, talk, sing, argue, conduct business, play games of chance, or while away the hours."²⁵⁹ Unsurprisingly, excessive drinking, a part of early national society in general, distinguished this social interaction. McMurry notes that the early republic has been called the "Alcoholic Republic," as annual per capita consumption reached four gallons of pure alcohol per year.²⁶⁰ Americans tolerated this heavy drinking for several reasons. First, according to Salinger, people valued alcohol's nutritional and medicinal purposes. Second and more pertinent to this discussion, drinking in taverns and inns had long been an integral element of leisure activities for locals and travelers. In short, drinking at the

²⁵⁹ Salinger, 7.

²⁶⁰ McMurry, 19. Notably, whiskey replaced rum as the preferred form of distilled spirits.

local public house was an entertaining activity for eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Americans with few other recreational opportunities.²⁶¹

The role of alcohol in the trans-Allegheny public house also reflected the region's unique economy. Whiskey production was a major "cash crop" in Pennsylvania's backcountry communities, and many backwoods farmers operated stills on their properties to supplement their income (see fig. 17).²⁶² In 1798, ninety-two residents in Washington County, for instance, reported having a distillery—almost twice as many as reported having a grist or saw mill!²⁶³ Large quantities of the whiskey went to outside markets, but the farmers also sold their product to local storekeepers, tavern owners, and travelers. Sally, like many others passing through the area, noted the presence of whiskey distillation in her narrative. In Fannetsburg, a village lying in between Allegheny's second and third mountains, for example, she observed that the "Inhabitants" made a "miserable Living, by retailing Liquors to the many Travellers who pass

²⁶¹ Salinger, 7.

²⁶² "Agriculture in the Settlement Period," in *Agricultural Resources of Pennsylvania, c. 1700-1960* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, n.d.), 11. Because whiskey was so vital to Appalachian economic and social life, residents fiercely protected it, as evidenced by widespread resistance to a federally imposed excise tax on domestically distilled spirits in the early 1790s. This resistance is often called the Whiskey Rebellion or Whiskey Insurrection. Residents living on Pennsylvania's western frontier areas vehemently protested this tax. Their resistance challenged federal authority and threatened the stability of the new nation. To quell the rebellion, George Washington raised a militia and led them to Washington County, effectively ending the resistance.

²⁶³ 1798 Pennsylvania U.S. Direct Tax Lists.

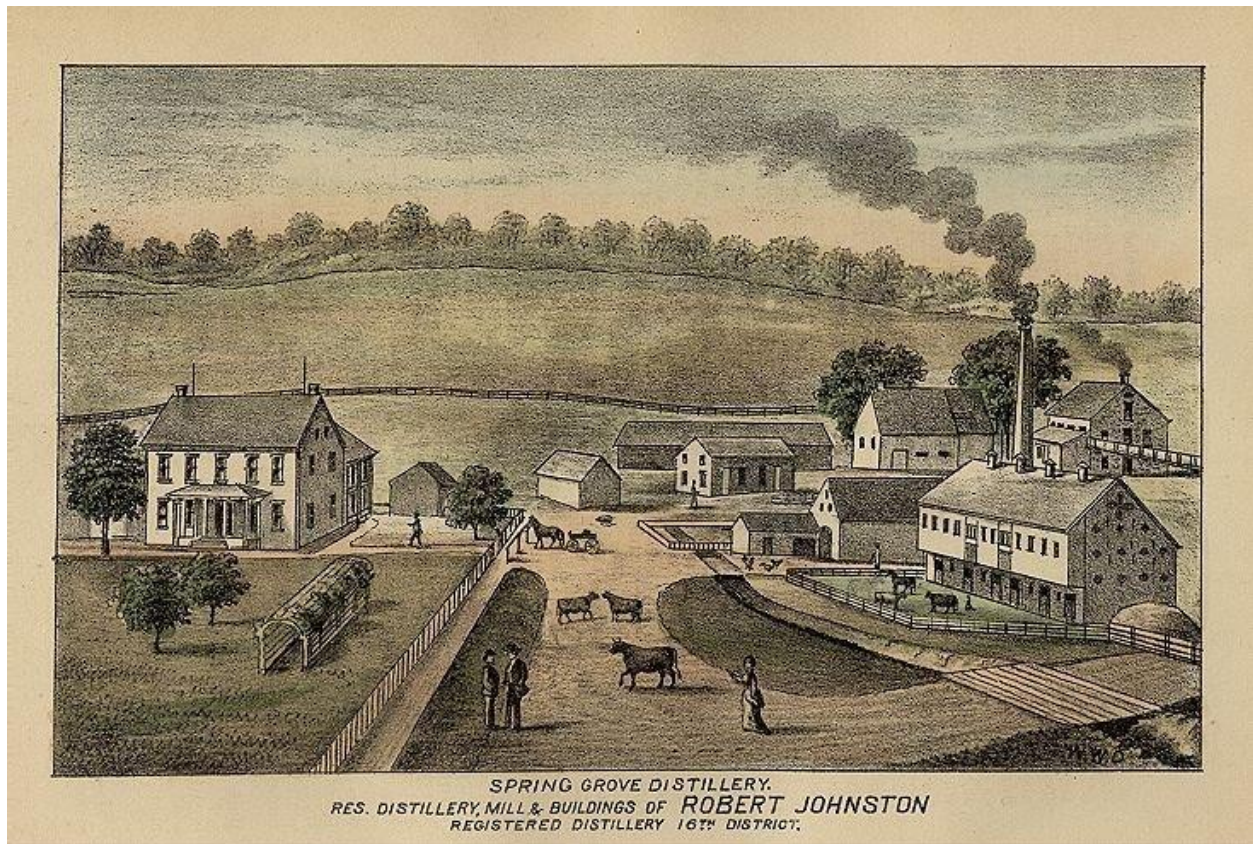


Figure 17. Print of Spring Grove Distillery, near Greenscastle, Pennsylvania. 1878.

This sketch by Willam Wallace Denslow (the famed illustrator of L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*) depicts the distillery of Robert Johnson (1825-1902), whose father also practiced whiskey production on the site at a time when Sally would have passed through the area. Although most of the buildings in this image, except for the grist mill at the far right, were constructed decades after Sally's journey, the picture captures the way in which the region's residents combined farming with distilling. *Source*: L.H.McCauley, *Historical Sketches of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chambersburg: D.F. Pursel, 1878), 247, 259.

that way.”²⁶⁴ Hence, both the production and consumption of alcohol were woven deeply into the daily fabric of backcountry life.

Taverns were primarily a male social space. While both sexes imbibed alcoholic beverages, gender norms discouraged women from drinking in public houses. It does seem probable that some women did drink in public houses, we just do not know to what extent.²⁶⁵ What we do know, however, is that male public drinking was rising during the early national period. Backcountry proprietors, attuned to this situation, marketed their services to male patrons, as an advertisement by innkeeper Joseph Dearmond in the April 10, 1799, *Oracle of Dauphin and Harrisburg Advertiser* illustrates: “Gentlemen who call [at the Rising Sun inn] may depend upon good treatment, attention and best of Liquors.”²⁶⁶ Dearmond’s specific appeal, however, to the more refined, genteel customer (“Gentlemen”) indicates the popularity of leisured drinking among men of all statuses. Salinger explains that throughout the eighteenth century drinking house establishments emerged just for elite patrons, adding to the growing number of public houses.²⁶⁷ Although some national leaders, such as John Adams and Benjamin

²⁶⁴ SAH, October 11, 1800, 185; Ibid. Almost all travelers and visitors passing through this region in the early national period mentioned whiskey in their written commentaries.

²⁶⁵ Salinger, 24; W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). Salinger notes that while there were no laws prohibiting women from drinking in taverns in early America, women who did frequent taverns were viewed as morally dissolute. However, there is disagreement about women’s participation in tavern culture. Rorabaugh maintains that women drinking in public simply was not tolerated. Yet, Imbarrato argues that women clearly did imbibe in taverns, but they are invisible in traditional historic records.

²⁶⁶ Advertisement, *Oracle of Dauphin and Harrisburg*, April 10, 1799. Dearmond informed the public “that he has opened a house of public entertainment at the Rising Sun, seven miles from Hummelstown, on the Reading road.”

²⁶⁷ Salinger, 50.

Rush, found the trend to be disturbing, their calls for temperance went mostly unheeded. As such, between 1790 and 1830, Americans consumed more alcoholic beverages than “ever before or since.”²⁶⁸

Sally, like other women travelers, provides insightful commentary on public house culture. Her self-reflective literary style gives added dimension to her description and speaks to the larger national discourses. Her readers would not have found direct statements on current events in her travel narrative.²⁶⁹ She never names “names” or specifies political figures. She does not call for temperance reform (such activities by women do not really take shape until after the 1820s). Sally merely called herself a “quiet spectator,” as she observed and recorded her experiences.²⁷⁰ When Sally wrote about life in the backcountry public houses; however, she also wrote about early national life. In this regard, her evaluations critiqued Early Republican ideology about citizenship, virtuous behavior, family sociability, and political partisanship. Because these issues concerned social and domestic order, her text would have resonated with genteel women readers who viewed themselves as moral standard bearers.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Rorabaugh, qtd. in Imbarrato, 73-74.

²⁶⁹ Sally is more willing to comment directly on politics and current events in her poetry. For examples, see the following works in her book: “The Indian Chief,” “On the Reverend Colin McFarquhar,” “A Landscape,” and “Derne.”

²⁷⁰ SAH, October 27, 1800, 203.

²⁷¹ According to Imbarrato, John Adams complained in 1761 that too many Americans “waste their time, spend their Money, [and] run in Debt” in taverns (73). For a recent summary of the history of the temperance movement see Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2016).

To better understand the following discussion on Sally's public house commentary, some historical context regarding the tenuous political situation in 1800 is needed. Just eighteen days before the start of the new century, George Washington died. Americans were stunned. His sudden death at this pivotal point in time felt like a bad omen, and the fledgling republic plunged into an intense state of grief. Cities and rural communities across the country followed President Adam's response to Washington's death and held public commemorations and military processions. Ironically, Washington's death proved to be both a unifying and divisive force for the young nation. The shared public mourning fostered a sense of unity among the disparate, loosely-federated states. Yet, factional debates regarding domestic and national policies dominated the political discourse. As Edward J. Larsen explains, a new kind of raucous, popular, and highly-partisan electioneering developed during the 1800 presidential campaign between the rival candidates—Federalist John Adams and Republican Thomas Jefferson—resulting in a divisive, tumultuous election.²⁷²

The year 1800 was certainly a disordered time. Revolutionary upheaval and political conflict in Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East brought the eighteenth century to an uneasy, tumultuous close around the world. The radical turn of the French Revolution, in particular, polarized Americans struggling with their own questions regarding the balance between individual liberty and state authority. At times, the new nation's survival seemed uncertain. By late summer and early fall, when Sally made her journey, the country was in political turmoil. Debates centered on popular democracy took center stage. In general, the

²⁷² Edward J. Larsen, *A Magnificent Catastrophe: The Tumultuous Election of 1800, America's First Presidential Campaign* (New York: The Free Press, 2007), 163.

Federalists and their nominee John Adams, argued that political power should remain with the elite as a mechanism to control the “masses” and avoid social disorder. The Republicans and their nominee Thomas Jefferson, on the other hand, asserted that the “people” should have more direct rule through the state governments. This increased factionalism between the two parties created an atmosphere in which many Americans believed the nation was too divided and could not be united.

In addition to these profound political changes, Americans struggled immensely with the social changes brought on by the Revolution. Becoming an independent society with shared ideals, norms, and values was a long, uneven cultural process, and Americans wavered between emulating and repudiating the values and traditions of the old world.²⁷³ As Kariann Akemi Yokota points out, there were no precedents upon which Americans could draw to resolve questions about national identity and how to “unbecome” British. “Everyday life had to catch up to the meteoric political changes generated by independence,” she writes.²⁷⁴ In other words, cultural change lags behind political change. Americans did not arrive at a unique national identity in one moment. Instead, a period of liminality occurred in the decades after the war. A transitional period, in which Americans stood at a threshold—no longer British citizens, but not

²⁷³ Recent studies use a postcolonial lens to explore the ways in which the new nation was caught between a desire to both emulate and abrogate British culture in a quest to achieve a unique American identity. See Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia, 2010) and Kariann Akemi Yokota, *Unbecoming British: How Revolutionary America Became a Postcolonial Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). For surveys of the period, see Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1786-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) and Daniel Walker Howe, *What God Hath Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁷⁴ Yokota, 11.

yet “wholly” citizens of the United States; between British social and cultural ideals, and betwixt evolving nationalist ideologies. A patchwork quilt of a landscape, not yet threaded together.

Some troubling questions arose in putting together this new landscape. What cultural and social threads would Americans keep? Modify? Change? Strengthen? Add? The rise of modern democracy at this time on both sides of the Atlantic changed individuals’ perceptions about their relationship and responsibility to the state. If democracy requires political participation from its citizens to exist, who gets to participate? Questions of citizenship, freedom, and the right to self-determination become especially vexing in the United States where large segments of the population are enslaved and/or disenfranchised. The role of women in the piecing together of national identity as viewed from this historical moment is central to this study. Would white women, a relatively privileged disenfranchised group, be permitted to vote and hold public office? What rights and responsibilities should women have in this new society? Thorny, sticky questions, all. Would too much change, as exemplified in France, fray, weaken, and possibly rip the already fragile fabric of the new republic?

This unstable world makes up the backdrop of Sally’s narrative. As the travelers traipsed across the nation’s backcountry, local taverns, town squares, and village commons would have buzzed with talk about the upcoming presidential election.²⁷⁵ Sally’s assessments on frontier social order illuminates the clash between genteel hierarchical structures and the more idealized egalitarian ones Americans were negotiating.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 164-176. Larsen’s study notes that legislatures in the early republic period typically met in the winter and spring. Politicians went home during the summer to attend to domestic affairs and to escape urban areas that were vulnerable to outbreaks of malaria and cholera. Thus, political activity picked up in the fall during state elections.

“The Scene of this Bacchanal”

In her appraisal of public house culture, Sally confronts the clashes surrounding ideal republican citizens and actual Americans. The drunken Americans she meets in the public houses are not, according to Sally’s narration, model citizens. They are not mannerly, orderly, courteous, reasonable, peaceful, respectful, moderate, or temperate. Instead, they are depicted as “riotous People.”²⁷⁶ Significantly, her most memorable accounts of social disorder take place late in her narrative, after crossing the Allegheny Mountains. At that point, she is very far away from the more settled areas of the East and closer to her new frontier home in the West. The wild and uncivilized setting that Sally described there added excitement to her narrative. More important, the remoteness of this area served as a literary safe haven for her to enter national discourse on popular democracy and traditional social order. Through the stories of inebriated landlords, unruly women, and drunken soldiers, Sally chips away at early national ideas of harmonious social order predicated on the tenets of sensibility.

Sally utilized a two-part framing device to narrate these later stories of public house culture. In making her assessment of a particular situation, she began by describing the perceived insensible behavior(s). Next, she elaborated on that evaluation and analyzed how the behavior(s) contradicted genteel moral and behavioral standards. One noteworthy conflict Sally observes after crossing the Allegheny Mountains that uses this approach concerns a landlord and his wife. On October 24, Sally and her family struggled to cross the difficult terrain of Chestnut Ridge in an angry snow storm. The next day, at an inn near the top of the summit, Sally

²⁷⁶ SAH, October 27, 1800, 201.

encountered a domestic social landscape that was just as stormy. In her remarks, Sally first made several suppositions about the proprietor's and his wife's behavior. In describing the couple, for example, she concluded that the "landlord" was a "confirmed Drunkard," and his "handsome" wife seemed "well-calculated to perform the Duties of her station." Upon further observation, Sally surmised that the innkeeper's drinking caused him to verbally mistreat his wife, as she appeared to be the "Object of ... his acrimonious Humor." As a result of this abuse, according to Sally, the wife whipped her husband, not once but twice, which defied the "reasonable Precept" of unconditional "Love, Honor, and Obedience on the part of the Female."²⁷⁷ Confounded by the wife's challenge to traditional patriarchal hierarchy, Sally ambiguously concluded that "Modesty and Power are very jarring Attributes, in the Female Character," suggesting the conflict between the wife's behavior and prescribed femininity.²⁷⁸

Paradoxically, Sally's illustration of backcountry marital discord mirrors her own divergence from traditional norms. Although the landlord impeded domestic harmony with his drunkenness, Sally focused her critique upon the wife's unconventional behavior. When the woman "took the Whip" against her husband, she also took physical and authority within the household away from him. Or as Sally wrote, the landlord's wife reversed the "Laws of Custom." Likewise, when Sally relinquished her roles of wife and mother *and* became a published author, she too broke with long established domestic norms which valued a nuclear family structure headed by the husband.

²⁷⁷ SAH, October 25, 1800, 200.

²⁷⁸ SAH, October 25, 1800, 200.

These laws of custom to which Sally referred were both social and legal standards that maintained women's subordinate position in society. As discussed in the introduction, women could not vote or hold political positions. Upon marriage, they became *femme covertes*, a legal status in which they could not own personal property, manage real estate, or make contracts in their own names. Despite a shift towards companionate marriage in the early national period, prescribed literature continued to stress submissiveness and meekness for women. As historian Karin Wulf notes, women were encouraged to defer to their husband's authority as the best way to maintain domestic happiness and stability.²⁷⁹ In depicting the wife as strong, powerful, and in control, Sally reveals a values clash between backcountry inhabitants and middling gentry. Moreover, she underscores the inherent contradictions between idealized domesticity and the real world experiences of many early national women. Whether consciously or subconsciously, Sally's narrative gives the reader an alternate view of womanhood, thus her work challenged the reader to reconsider the notions that constrained women to traditional hierarchical domesticity.

Sally further builds on her ambivalent portrayal of public house culture with an emblematic story about a cornhusking frolic. To begin, her depiction reveals the importance of corn shucking "bees" or frolics in frontier harvest celebratory traditions. On October 26, Sally wrote, "Last night was a jovial one. The Landlady had collected a number of persons to husk Corn; and when their Business was finished, they devoted the night to Dancing, Singing, and other Exercises."²⁸⁰ As Nicholas P. Hardeman's explains, cornhusking parties, held at the end of the harvest season, combined work and pleasure. The celebratory spirit of these events, like

²⁷⁹ Wulf, 5, 34-35.

²⁸⁰ SAH, October 26, 1800, 200.

other public house frolics, could be quite rowdy.²⁸¹ Men and women mingled together in intimate ways and the alcohol flowed freely, as the painting *Barroom Dancing* by Pennsylvania artist John Lewis Krimmel illustrates (fig. 18).

From a genteel viewpoint, however, this more raucous frontier tradition upset standards of polite sociability. Hence, Sally gave her readers an image of dancing and socializing characterized by dynamic, unbridled turbulence:

Unfortunately, the Room immediately under my Bedchamber was the scene of this Bacchanal; and I frankly confess, that I wished them either less happy, or that their Happiness consisted in Enjoyments similar to mine.

The Frolic was continued with great Spirit and Vigor; and the Landlady, her Daughter, and the Maid were the only Competitors for the prize of Agility...the old Gentleman [the landlord]...swore and shouted in conjunction with his Guests. From the Noise and Discord, which the Ballroom exhibited, we began to fancy ourselves in the neighborhood of Pandemonium.²⁸²

For Sally, the backcountry women's behavior showed a lack of bodily restraint, and therefore was a not a reflection of tasteful behavior.

Dancing was a common social activity across all classes. Yet, in genteel circles, dancing was disciplined, orderly, graceful, and governed by strict codes of gendered conduct—the opposite of the “Pandemonium” Sally described.²⁸³ Dancing was a part of the educational

²⁸¹ Nicholas P. Hardeman, *Shucks, Shocks, and Hominy Blocks: Corn as a Way of Life in Pioneer America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

²⁸² SAH, October 26, 1800, 200.

²⁸³ Kelly, *Republic of Taste*, 32-33.



Figure 18. *Barroom Dancing* by John Lewis Krimmel. Circa 1820.

Source: Courtesy of the Library of Congress (Prints and Photographs Division).

curriculum for refined young women. These “ornamental studies” prepared women for their future roles as republican wives and mothers.²⁸⁴ The backcountry women’s more active, spirited, and vigorous frolicking—as Sally drolly noted, “the Landlady, her Daughter, and the Maid were the only Competitors for the prize of Agility”—did not conform to prescribed expectations of middle-class femininity. A fellow lodger, “a young Gentleman,” according to Sally, went so far as to condemn the celebration as immoral by stating it had “a Resemblance of the Customs and Employments of Demons!”²⁸⁵ Although Sally dismissed the gentleman’s remarks by suggesting that “Mirth and good cheer” must not be among his own experience, the cornhusking can be seen as representative of the larger, of the moment, class-based debates on family order and womanhood.

“Medley of Anarchy and Confusion”

How much political power should ordinary American citizens have? Scholars including Edward J. Larson have shown that early national elite Americans fiercely debated this question. They feared political partisanship and argued over how directly the voter should participate in the election process. This discourse took place amid the tumultuous political developments of the French Revolution and the subsequent rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Moreover, as Larsen notes, some Americans drew erroneous parallels between the violent popular uprisings in France that precipitated the political and social “chaos” and the “easily suppressed” backcountry tax

²⁸⁴ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 25.

²⁸⁵ SAH, October 26, 1800, 200.

revolts that occurred in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania at the end of the eighteenth century.²⁸⁶ As an educated American, Sally would have been attuned to these discourses. In fact, after one apparently irrational conversation with a landlord in the Laurel Highlands, Sally sarcastically commented, “Happy, O America! favored Nation! How securely art thou fortified against foreign Invasion and homebred Faction; when even thy Retailers of Gin and Brandy possess Brains adequate to inspect, judge of, and determine the most intricate Affairs of Government.”²⁸⁷ Sally’s skepticism in this instance echoed the concerns of many elite Americans who feared that popular democracy and the ensuing partisanship would lead the country into social anarchy and violence.

Sally’s encounters with male lodgers in the backcountry public houses provide a glimpse at the development of this new unruly form of political participation. Sally does not include direct political commentary. Instead, she describes the people and the experiences hinting at this larger national discourse. Male travelers from across the socio-economic spectrum peopled the public houses Sally visited. For example, Sally includes remarks on fellow “gentlemen” lodgers, indicating men of elite or refined middling status. Yet, her most memorable stories involving disorder and the opposite sex refer to those of the “lower sort,” such as the aforementioned hunters and some innkeepers. Militia soldiers comprise another lower class group of men with which Sally interacts. With her descriptive account of a passionate political argument among a

²⁸⁶ Larson, 68-69. The 1786 uprising in which Massachusetts’ citizens protested against state tax and foreclosure laws is known as Shay’s Rebellion. In Pennsylvania, citizens in the southwestern region protested against national excise taxes in 1794, in what has been termed the Whiskey Rebellion.

²⁸⁷ SAH, October 28, 1800, 205.

group of reviewing soldiers, Sally seemed to be asking the following question: Was rough and tumble democracy compatible with republican representative government?

This chapter began with a discussion on a militia muster in the forest. As noted, such activities brought townspeople to the streets for festive merrymaking and entertainment. The parades and marches frequently were held to celebrate a variety of politically associated events—such as marking the anniversary of American independence, paying homage to national public figures, and expressing (or disavowing) partisan support for the rising political parties. Newspapers promoted these festivities by announcing events for local readers to attend and reporting on similar celebrations around the nation. Yet, as Simon P. Newman argues, there is a class dynamic to this “festive culture.” In fact, he writes, that these kinds of events were especially prominent in coastal New England and the Middle Atlantic, “where economic hardship and rising social tensions inflamed political passions” in the early national period. Thus, for rural Pennsylvanians, the militia reviews and festivals allowed ordinary people to have political expression. In this regard, they were “tangible displays” of patriotism among lower-class citizens, in addition to showing the militia soldiers’ commitment to an ordered and lawful republican society.²⁸⁸ But, as Sally’s narrative illustrates in the following example, this more boisterous political culture often led to fighting.

Immediately following the cornhusking “bacchanal” episode, Sally regales her readers with an entertaining story of drunken soldiers. In this case, the events occurred at a different public house in Greensburg on October 27. Owing to a military public review from the previous

²⁸⁸ Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 17-19, 127.

day, many soldiers occupied the inn. According to Sally, “every Man, except the Landlord, was intoxicated.” As the night progressed, they “seemed naturally haughty and martial.” Over the course of the evening, the soldiers engaged in an “ardent” political debate that devolved into physical violence. “The field of Controversy became too warm to allow Reason ... to preside,” Sally related, “and her Office fell into the hands of those hot-headed Demagogues, the Passions—each of which, disdain[ing] subordination, rose in Arms, and alternately seized the reigns [sic] of Government.” The scene, as Sally described it, was “a medley of Anarchy and Confusion,” intimating how the men’s zealous behavior crossed the boundaries of acceptable genteel ideas of political debate.²⁸⁹

Sally strengthened her position by reminding her readers that reason and unity (not discord) formed the backbone of early national ideology. However, the backcountry, as Sally tells it, exposed the fault lines in this initial vision of republican government—a vision that presupposed a cohesive nation governed by an educated, elite class of men. Instead, Sally points to the country’s plurality and evolving shift away from this paradigm. She wrote about the arguing soldiers, “Those stupendous and intricate Affairs, which require the united Wisdom of the ablest Statesman of our Country, were here developed, discussed, and bandied from tongue to tongue ... ,” whereby “Conviction was not the Object in view.” Sally further unsettles notions of an idealistic citizenry moved to action by virtue and honor by depicting the men as self-interested and self-aggrandizing: “Every Man became an Orator; and to obtain Audience was the End most desired. The principal Excellence belonged not to him who spoke best, but to him who spoke loudest and most; every Man seemed to have the lungs of a Stentor.” The verbal chaos

²⁸⁹ SAH, October 27, 1800, 202.

quickly turned to the threat of physical violence when, according to Sally, the men “seized their Swords” to settle the argument. Although a commanding officer brought the incident to a close without bloodshed, Sally’s recitation of the event, in the end, is ambiguous. On the one hand, she challenged conventional republican ideology; yet at the same time, she questioned the veracity of popular democracy.

As Sally’s commentary on public house material and social culture reveals, the position of a woman travel writer was complicated. She lacked an official political voice, but she was expected to uphold social virtue and maintain social harmony. Prescriptive literature advised women to avoid partisanship, but women were expected to reflect the ideals of republican womanhood. Sally’s ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory positions on public house life, reflect the equally blurred private/public spaces early national women negotiated. I undertake a more in-depth exploration of this dynamic in the next chapter by examining the conflicts between women’s authorship and intellectual interests and prescribed gender norms.

Chapter Four: Authorial Crossings: Gender, Invention, and the Travel Narrative

She makes no doubt, the man of books
Will many faults detect;
In grammar, and in 'hooks and crooks,'
Will call her incorrect.

But, Gentlemen, she tells you true,
Her learning in its prime,
Is just to read her Bible through,
And write a sorry Rhyme.

Sally wrote these verses to address the intellectual double standards early national women writers faced. Published in her book as part of the preface poem, "To Critics," the words embody both an artistic expression and a lived experience.²⁹⁰ The poem also illuminates the contradictions women authors encountered in demonstrating their intellectual abilities. As Edward Watts notes, "literary exchange was considered central to the formation of national character."²⁹¹ Women were eager to enter into and contribute to this traditionally male-oriented world. Women writers, however, who crossed into the public realm were constantly aware of male criticism ("the man of books" and "Gentlemen") and felt compelled to downplay their intellectual abilities ("Her learning in its prime, /Is just to read her Bible through/And write a

²⁹⁰ I borrow this concept from Lucia McMahon who develops this interpretation of a poem in her book *Mere Equals*, 164. She analyzes a poem by Miss A.M. Burton delivered in 1803 at commencement exercises held at Susanna Rowson's Female Academy. McMahon refers to the poem as "making Burton's acquisition of education at once a lived experience and a literary representation." In much the same way, I am making the argument that Sally's literary expressions are artistic creations, but the texts also reflect her actual, lived experiences.

²⁹¹ Watts, 54-55.

sorry Rhyme”). For that reason, we need to look beneath the veil of Sally’s feigned modesty. Her writings reveal a classically educated woman who *was* determined to show her intellectual development. Even as she offered concessions to her male *critics* (“Those that assert ‘that Nature can’t/Inspire a Poet’s Song’”) in this poem, she countered with literary evidence (“May here select an argument/To prove their thesis wrong”) using the most highly-regarded modes and conventions of her day. Why does Sally claim both intellectual inferiority and intellectual prowess at the same time?²⁹²

Sally published her writings during a period of intense debate over the role of women in the new nation. Much of the discourse focused on improving women’s education. But the heart of the discussions centered on *how* women should apply their education in a democratic society. Post-Revolutionary Americans, as Linda Kerber proves, delineated female citizenship with a compromise that constrained women to domestic roles.²⁹³ Scholars have since built on Kerber’s analysis to show that women did participate in civic life, notably through print culture.²⁹⁴ Yet, for women of the time, the model of republican motherhood would have been inescapable. They were bombarded with conflicting messages in various forms—newspapers, sermons, magazines, novels, poetry—advocating for their improved education while promoting domesticity. At the

²⁹² All quotes are from her poem “To Critics,” 9.

²⁹³ Linda Kerber, “The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment—An American Perspective,” *American Quarterly* 28, no.2 (1976):187-205.

²⁹⁴ See McMahon, *Mere Equals*, Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash*, and Kelley, *Learning to Speak*.

same time, new ideas regarding women's essential inferiority, as Rosemarie Zagari has shown, further circumscribed their political and intellectual equality.²⁹⁵

How did women who claimed authorship respond to these multiple intersecting social and cultural constraints? As Sally's experience exemplifies, many women desired and achieved a greater intellectual engagement than prescribed notions of womanhood would allow. In this chapter, I use Sally's travel narrative to explore the strategies women undertook to negotiate a public voice within the limitations placed on their authorial freedom. I begin the chapter by establishing Sally's self-fashioned identity as an author/narrator and explaining how an epistle-styled travel narrative gave her a pathway into the public realm. How did she elide social reproach? Keeping in mind that Sally's narrative was published, marketed, and sold to a particular audience, its presentation is of vital importance. Her use of conventional prefatory materials, including title page, poetic apostrophes, and address to her readers, allowed Sally to present herself as a proper genteel woman to her buyers and readers. The epistolary format and conventional devices also can be viewed as subversive modes that she employed to style an authorial identity and challenge the status quo—all without male readers even knowing the status quo had even been challenged. By understanding the social and cultural risks women writers took in adopting a feminine authorial position, we gain a greater understanding of the contradictions inherent in their travel narratives.

²⁹⁵ Zagari, 180.

“The Authoress”

On October 20, twelve days into her westward journey, Sally found herself on top of Allegheny Mountain in Somerset County. Getting there had been quite a trial. A cold, steady rain hampered the small party’s progress through the forested foothills. The “Roads are very bad,” Sally noted three days earlier. Forced to make the summit on foot, she continued, “We are all much fatigued.” The travelers’ ordeal worsened when “one of the horses foundered,” and they were “obliged to solicit Lodging at a little Cabbin” in Bedford County. Finally, after spending two more nights at “the Seat of a Gentleman” due to the rain-swollen roads, they reached the top of the mountain. The elevation was breathtaking—enough to make Sally’s head grow “light,” as she peered down to “contemplate the almost unfathomable Gulph below” her. She drank in the experience and reflected on the life awaiting her on the other side of the mountain. Spirits already dampened by the miserable weather, she disconsolately wrote, “With a heavy Heart I view the dreadful barrier that separates me from my native home, and from you.”²⁹⁶

The physical divide between Sally’s past and present situation offers a striking metaphor for the cultural divides she faced. Because Sally crossed over into masculine territory, literally and literarily, she challenged accepted gender notions of travel and public authorship. Traditionally, travel has been viewed as masculine; likewise, the traveler has been figured as a man. Home, on the other hand, was a woman’s domain. If we consider all that travel

²⁹⁶ SAH, October 20, 1800, 193.

connotes—adventure, exploration, freedom, assessment—it is easy to see how such attributes fall outside the customary boundaries of genteel domesticity.

Sally's roles as traveler and writer required a reimagining of herself. She is an adventurer who goes beyond traditional domestic spaces. She is an explorer of the backcountry. She is a discoverer of both human nature and the physical landscape. She puts pen to paper and writes about it for a public audience. As Elizabeth A. Bohls argues, women were not imagined as travelers; they were not visualized as explorers, scientists, and cultural interpreters.²⁹⁷ However, when Sally wandered onto a “winding path” in the mountainside of Huntingdon County by herself (unaccompanied by a male guardian!), for example, to examine “the Curiosities of Nature,” she took on those exact roles. Cognizant of the “Impropriety of [her] conduct,” Sally quickly mitigated the potential damage to her womanhood by noting the “arrival of her Brother” on the scene in the next paragraph.²⁹⁸ The envisioning, however, was already done.

The publication of her narrative pushed Sally's opinions into the public world. Throughout the text, she gives her assessment and judgment on a variety of topics, including religion, culture, politics, and nature. For instance, Sally's experiences with innkeepers led her to sarcastically critique popular democracy. “Happy, O America! favored Nation! How securely art thou fortified against foreign Invasion and homebred Faction,” she wryly declared, “when

²⁹⁷ Bohls, 17. Although women's contributions to westward settlement had been overlooked and overshadowed because they did not necessarily fit into the traditional conquest narrative, scholars have since recovered this story and added it to the historical record. See Annette Kolodny's *The Land Before Her* (1984) and *The Lay of the Land* (1984); Lillian Schlissel's *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (1982); and Susan Clair Imbarrato's *Traveling Women* (2006).

²⁹⁸ SAH, October 12, 1800, 187-188.

even thy Retailers of Gin and Brandy possess Brains adequate to inspect, judge of, and determine the most intricate Affairs of Government.”²⁹⁹ Her sentiments here exemplified her wit and ability to undermine early national ideology. Hence, Sally turned to literary and aesthetic convention to negotiate the social and cultural divides she encountered as a writer and traveler.

Sally’s literary voice shows the fluidity of public and private space boundaries in the early Republic. Despite social resistance and cultural barriers, Sally fashioned a clear authorial identity for herself in the public sphere. She wrote about herself in the act of writing—“I write,” “I seize the Quill,” “I purpose to write you,” “I describe,” “I sketch,” “My pen,” “I drop my pen,” “I touch my pen” —at least eleven times throughout the narrative. Only once in the narrative does she “drop the pen” due to exhaustion.³⁰⁰ More important, Sally presented writing as an intellectual activity and a learned skill (“[I] polished this Jewel of my brain”). Her ability to engender the voice of authority becomes even more noteworthy when one remembers that Sally’s audience included both men and women. In fact, more than seventy-five percent of the seven-hundred and sixty-two subscribers to Sally’s book were men. According to Edward Watts, it was rare for early Republican women authors to have an audience of both sexes.³⁰¹ Thus, Sally bridged the divide separating her from her male readers by demonstrating her ability to think and act in rational ways.³⁰²

²⁹⁹ SAH, October 28, 1800, 205.

³⁰⁰ SAH, October 15, 1800, 192.

³⁰¹ Watts, 55.

³⁰² Imbarrato, 12. Imbarrato also points out that early American women’s travel narratives undermine noted German philosopher Jürgen Habermas’ paradigmatic model of the public and private as spaces strictly-defined by gender.

Sally continually rendered her authorial self (consciously or unconsciously) as a sensible narrator to counter gender bias. In one suggestive example on October 21, she cast her “writer” self in equal terms with a fellow male scribe. “Like myself,” she wrote, “[he] seems to have contracted a passion for the Quill.” In an acknowledgment of the cultural deference accorded to literary exchange, Sally metaphorically explained how the typically noisy, rowdy inn fell temporarily silent—“as silent as the Inhabitants of our Great Grandfather’s Tombs.”³⁰³ She employed this clichéd simile as a rhetorical flourish—a means to heighten the suspense of her story. But, the conventional device also served to elevate her own authorial position. By placing herself upon the same intellectual plane as a man, she established common ground with her male readers.

Sally usually contrasted her authorial “reasoned” self against scenes of raucous backcountry disorder. In the previously noted situation, for instance, Sally framed a socially disturbing scene with literary devices. After giving the reader her simile in which the inn’s orderly, quiet atmosphere is compared to “our Grandfather’s Tombs,” she described how an uncontrollable (hence irrational) “noisy person” broke the peaceful “Charm which held the rest in Silence” with a “loud and Merry song.” Sally’s reasoned narrator quickly returns with a quatrain of neoclassical verse extolling the “Blessings of uninterrupted Sleep” for a “fatigued Traveller [sic].”³⁰⁴ This rather formulaic relating of the episode served two purposes: it added drama to her adventure (thereby proving her literary acumen), but it also compelled the reader to

³⁰³ SAH, October 21, 1800, 193.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 193-194.

accept the writer's superior commonsense. Throughout her text, Sally's self-presentation as a rational traveler intellectually engaged with her environment acted to establish her credibility.

As a genre, travel writing paradoxically presented both a free and limited literary space for Sally. Elite and middling women faced continual public scrutiny regarding their behavior. Violations of modesty, chastity, and humility, for example, could damage a woman's reputation. Women who broke with behavioral norms, "even in small ways," Laura Laffrado notes, received "swift, gendered censure."³⁰⁵ This reality helps explain the puzzling contradictions found throughout Sally's text. For instance, a self-described "homebred Rustic" in the opening of the narrative, Sally contrarily fashioned herself as a genteel member of the "better sort" throughout the rest of the story.³⁰⁶ Her own deviance from expected domestic ideals of womanhood, furthermore, did not stop her from criticizing other non-normative women as "inexorable" and "stranger[s] to the very outlines of Good-breeding."³⁰⁷ To lessen possible censure and preserve her genteel femininity, Sally (like other women writers) used formulaic devices to circumvent the gendered constraints placed upon her freedom. Her text, therefore, illustrates the tensions between prescribed behavior and real life situations. According to Imbarrato, women travelers relocating to backcountry and frontier areas often experienced the journey as a test of their ability to adapt to new situations. Because of its association with change and self-discovery, the travel narrative aligned well with the traveler's own liminal state.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁵ Laura Laffrado, *Uncommon Women: Gender and Representation in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009), 4, 9.

³⁰⁶ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178; October 9, 1800, 181.

³⁰⁷ SAH, October 27, 1800, 198.

³⁰⁸ Imbarrato, 14.

If we look more deeply, we can see how Sally inventively wove an epistolary device into her travel narrative to circumvent prescriptions against female authorship.³⁰⁹ When Sally assured readers that her narrative would “relate Occurrences, unadorned, as they may take place,”³¹⁰ she promised a fact-based tale. This “realism” and gradual unfolding of the narrative through the epistolary form served to draw in her readers and make for a more gripping story. Her narrative then presents a much more imaginative tale than her conventional statement implies. How could such a conflicting assertion affirm the legitimacy of Sally’s authorial self and enhance the reception of her narrative? The answer lies within the inherent ability of both travel and letter writing to blur the lines between private and public spaces. Because Sally is the narrator and the subject of the story, her readers expected a reconstructed narrative—a story they knew was ostensibly based on fact but told through an invented voice.

Marguerite Helmers and Tilar Mazzeo remind us that “all representation of the self, like memory, is selective, self-censoring, and constructed.” This “making and unmaking” of the self, they argue, is a “crucial element” of the travel narrative.³¹¹ Readers understand that the traveler’s narrative voice, the “I,” is a product of traveling and actually demand a more inventive rendering. The implication of this shared meaning between reader and writer is immense when considering the position of marginalized writers. It permitted experimentation with different

³⁰⁹ *Traveling South: Travel Narratives and the Construction of American Identity* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 108. John David Cox and other scholars have shown the commonality of the epistle format in early national women’s literature.

³¹⁰ SAH, Oct. 7, 1800, 178.

³¹¹ Marguerite Helmers and Tilar Mazzeo, eds., *The Traveling and Writing Self* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 7-8.

identities and roles under the cover of literary types. (These archetypes, such as domestic caretaker, romance heroine, and picaresque traveler, will be the subject of “Chapter Six” of this dissertation.) By combining the travel narrative with letter writing’s own fluidity, a writer had a very useful tool to subvert the status quo.

Therefore, Sally most likely made up the letter device to authorize her text. To carry out this fiction, Sally added “in a Letter to a Lady” to her story’s title and intermittently addressed a “Madam” or “Dear Madam” in her entries. The epistle-styled entries, similar to journaling, also called for the addition of dates. This convention further emphasized the immediacy and “reality” of the writing and content. It is unlikely, as others have suggested, that she was literally writing to her mother or a sister. Sally was clearly writing with an intent to publish, despite her declaration that the narrative was “intended for the Amusement, of a highly respected Lady.”³¹² Sally’s use of this convention was not unusual. Most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women’s travel narratives were published as “personal” or “private” modes, such as letters or journals. Male writers also sometimes adopted this epistolary form. It was more common in women’s narratives because it could be strategically employed to stake out literary terrain. As Watts argues, the epistolary convention was just that—a convention used to bring social acceptance to the woman’s narrative and make it more believable.³¹³

³¹² SAH, 178.

³¹³ Watts, 108.

“Where Young Imagination’s Wings Expand”

Sally’s travel narrative can be read as a text of self-creation and literary innovation. The associations between travel and freedom and between experience and transformation are well-established in literature. Freedom, opportunity, independence—these abstract ideals have lured generations to pick up stakes and move. Any one of these notions, or perhaps all of them, may have prompted Sally to uproot herself from all that she held dear—her family, friends, church, and most of all, her children—to journey across the state and make a new life among unfamiliar people and surroundings. Certainly, Sally’s unhappy marital state was a tangible reason for her decision, one that she can only allude to in the narrative.³¹⁴ But, as Bohls makes clear in her study of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century English women travel writers, “Then, as now, travel was marked by class and gender, race and nation.”³¹⁵ Women turned to conventions but employed them in new and inventive ways. Reading Sally’s text using feminist methodologies illustrates a dynamism and experimentation with the period’s ideologies and aesthetic forms that previous generations of historians ignored. In her journey, writing became the vehicle that gave her intellectual freedom, if not the personal freedom to determine her own marital and economic status.

Sally used literary conventions strategically and creatively to claim the power of authorship. After climbing a mountain in a howling snowstorm, Sally turned to poetry and

³¹⁴ In her narrative, for example, Sally explained her departure by using a quote from Thomson’s poem, *Seasons*. She wrote, “impell’d by strong Necessity’s Supreme command, I am commencing an exile” (177). This allusion most likely refers to her marital separation.

³¹⁵ Bohls, 17.

metaphor—a “touch of my Pen”— to escape from the “scowling Storms” of her life as she “woo [s] the “genial soul-expanding smile” to create an “air-spun Fabric” of her own.³¹⁶ Early Republican women often used conventional metaphors of flight and birds to express a desire to be intellectually free. Such expressions, sprinkled throughout Sally’s narrative, connect to this collective imagery: She is “bursting the shackles [of her imagination] which confine it to Earth,” for example.³¹⁷ Furthermore, the sublime for Sally is “where young Imagination’s wings expand. ... There let me wander, pensive and alone,” she wrote, “till thought takes wing.”³¹⁸ This imagery also alludes to national symbolism depicting America as a bird set free from the British Empire by the hand of Lady Liberty (see fig. 19). Thus, Sally’s appropriation of this discourse is disrupting, as it brings attention to the nation’s double-standards regarding liberty and equality. Her poignant poetic musings, written in Pennsylvania’s backcountry forests at a transitional moment in her life, also point to instances of self-awareness and self-determination.

Unquestionably, these expressions are formulated using British standards and conventionalities. The shedding of British colonial social institutions and the fashioning of a new American skin out of a fluid, diverse, regionalized society was uneven and messy. In *Inheriting the Revolution* (2000), Joyce Appleby traces this process to the Jeffersonian

³¹⁶ SAH, October 25, 1800, 199.

³¹⁷ SAH, October 12, 1800, 188.

³¹⁸ SAH, October 14, 1800, 191.



Figure 19. Lady Liberty print (late 18th century).

This image portrays Lady Liberty freeing the United States from the British empire. She holds a liberty pole with a cap and wears a laurel wreath, the classical symbol of victory. The bird flies into a pastoral American setting with church steeples dominating the landscape connecting virtue and piety.

generation. “Opportunity, mobility, and egalitarian zeal worked together to sap older ways of thinking about social position,” she writes. However, the post-Revolutionary generation needed to sort through “the confusing tropes of revolutionary rhetoric” to begin to “self-consciously... rework social distinctions for a liberal democracy.” Americans knew the rhetoric, according to Appleby, but they lacked “shared sentiments, symbols, and social explanations” on how to integrate real world diversity into a collective national whole.³¹⁹ Thus, this generation needed to construct new social forms and cultural practices—a vexing proposition when reality and idealism did not match. Women knew that they were social arbiters charged with upholding and promoting certain behaviors. So Sally turned to popular literary and aesthetic modes and standards in order to show her genteel readers that she was an educated woman. She demonstrated her facility with the different genres and ability to craft a logical narrative. In addition, these conventions allowed her to encapsulate her experience into predictable patterns that her readers expected.

As a woman writer, however, her adoption of convention is more complicated than a mere appeal to reader demands and interests. I would argue that she communicated with her genteel audience in their language to create an illusion of stability in order to deliver potentially destabilizing content. Her constructed author/ narrator allowed her to assume more adventurous and assertive roles than gender norms would usually permit. This identity also enabled her to decide what details to leave in and what details to leave out, especially in regards to her own

³¹⁹ Joyce Appleby, *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generations of Americans* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 21.

liminal marital status. It positioned her to publically critique and satirize early republican life under the cover of middling sorts' and elite respectability and gentility.

“No Wild Ambition E'er Indites”

Noted eighteenth-century lexicographer Samuel Johnson defined an “author” as “The first beginner or mover of any thing [sic]; he to whom any thing owes its original.”³²⁰ This definition elucidates the multi-layered meanings connected to writing at the time. An author was more than a writer; “he” was both a creator and male. Relevant to this idea was the Romantic concept of “genius.” “Genius” was the “spirit” of creativity that animated writers, but it was also viewed as a natural artistic drive that went beyond temporal ability. As English Romantic poet Edward Young noted in *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), “With regard to the Intellectual, *Genius*, is that God within.”³²¹ In other words, genius gave creators special powers of “imagination,” “mind,” and “intellect.” Early national Americans looked to writers of “genius,” especially poets, to express national identity. As a woman claiming authorship, as well as poetic “genius,” Sally challenged the gendered constructions of these ideas.

The book’s prefatory materials, a title page and poetic apostrophes, illustrate the complexity of Sally’s literary position. She was aware that her physical and literary departure from the domestic sphere would be judged: “Though wise folks frown, and Witlings chide, /And

³²⁰ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London: J.F. Rivington, 1785).

³²¹ Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), ed. Edith J. Morley (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1918), 13-15.

Critics overset.” Thus, Sally included the standard self-devaluing apologia often found in women’s writing. On the surface, these self-critical provisos might be read as statements to uphold the status quo. But, I would argue, in Sally’s case her prefatory statements serve a more subversive purpose.³²² As Georgi-Findlay asserts, women writers often used the “language of the powerless” to claim “the power of marginality assigned to women.”³²³ Hence, Sally’s prefatory materials deflected criticism, but they also were used to prepare readers for the very rhetorical skills that she literarily denied.

The book’s title page signals to readers that it is the work of a woman writer. Like most books of the time, it has a rather awkward title: *Poems, on Different Subjects. To which is added a Descriptive Account of a Family Tour to the West; In the Year, 1800. In a Letter to a Lady.* The epistolary format of the text (“In a Letter to a Lady”) is made known and establishes Sally’s femininity and genteel status (see fig. 20). The title emphasizes the domestic nature and concerns of the journey. Although she traveled “To the West,” a region generally viewed as rustic and exotic, Sally was on a “Family Tour,” not an expedition of manly adventure and wild escapade. In fact, her rendering, as she noted, will be a “Descriptive Account,” an indication that the tale will focus on manners, customs, and aesthetic interpretations of the landscape. This

³²² Shirley Foster and Sara Mills, eds., *An Anthology of Women’s Travel Writing* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002), 10. Foster and Mills assert that many women used apologetic prefaces as “subversive masking” gestures to “block out” and “conceal” elements and parts of their texts that might appear too masculine. They explain how this strategy allowed many women travelers to gain a public voice by writing about issues men typically ignored and appearing to uphold traditional gender stereotypes, thus they could subvert the traditional male action hero motif and control their own stories.

³²³ Georgi-Findlay, 22.

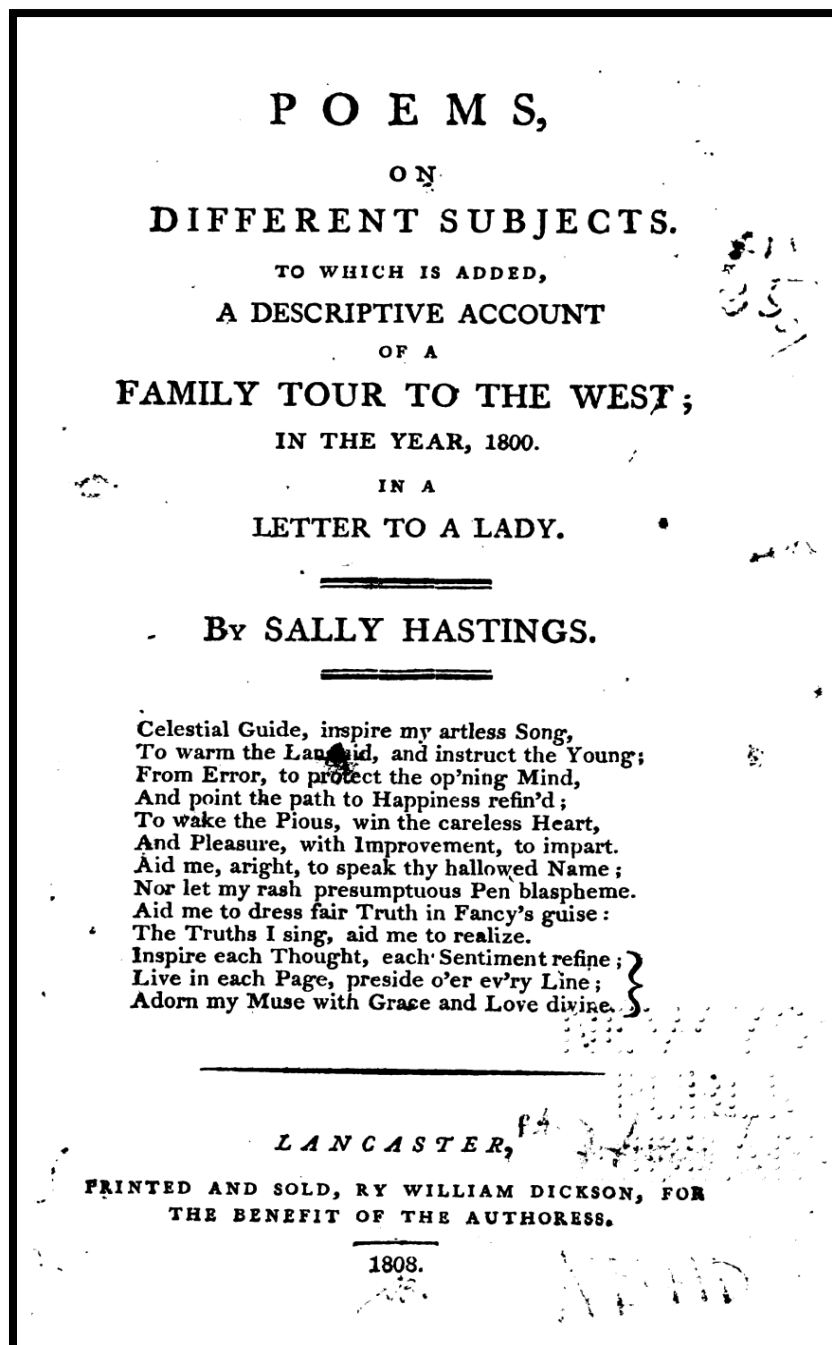


Figure 20. Title page from *Poems and Different Subjects*. 1808.

Interestingly, Sally does not use a conventional pseudonym but claims outright authorship of her book and poetry. The title page, however, does present a poem that domesticates her work.

social orientation or frame reinforced Sally's genteel and refined social status. It made her narrative more acceptable by connecting to her readers' shared values and ideals regarding appropriate feminine behavior and activity. The implied boundaries Sally sets forth in the title differentiate her travel account from the more empirical, scientific male tradition. This gendered positioning of the text, however, does not mean that she will not regale her readers with episodes of danger and excitement. On the contrary, her narrative does include such exploits. Instead, it ties her writing modes to her marginalized status, so that she can draw upon domesticity to claim authorial power.³²⁴

Sally continues to invoke standards of republican motherhood to legitimate her work with a title page poem. In this piece, she emphasizes the educational, thereby domestic, characteristics of her book. Hence, she calls upon her *genius* (a traditionally male-identified attribute)—“Celestial Guide”—to facilitate her role as an educator. To “warm the Languid, and instruct the Young” and keep them “From Error,” she professes. Her purpose, she poetically explains, is to act as a guardian for children, or “to protect the op'ning Mind.” She then seizes cultural legitimacy with a moral justification: “To wake the Pious” and “with Improvement, to impart.”³²⁵ The edifying properties of her work also justify the knowledge, insight, skill, opinion, wisdom (her intellectualism) on display in her poetry and narrative.

³²⁴ Georgi-Findlay, 22-23. See Georgi-Findlay's similar argument in her analysis of later women's narratives published in the 1830s and 1840s.

³²⁵ SAH, 1.

Sally's author/narrator voice comes from both a gendered and a genteel perspective. As a woman, Sally entered public discourse from a marginalized position. But, she was also circumscribed by class-based norms. As a member of a middling to upper-middling class, she connected to the values placed on education, as well as the assignation of moral superiority to women. The title page reflects and reinforces these ideals of republican motherhood. Despite the self-deprecation, in which she refers to her work as an "artless song"—writing that lacks skill and sophistication—she cast herself in a role of authority as a spiritual guardian and teacher. This strategy also speaks to the underlying assumptions that genteel women should not seek self-gratification, notoriety, or other public acclaim. Yet, she did not use a pseudonym to claim authorship. In fact, "BY SALLY HASTINGS" appears conspicuously in all capital letters front and center on the middle of the page. In this way, the title page acts as a little microcosm of Sally's writing. It shows us how Sally defined herself as an author, and it illuminates the inherent ambiguities women faced in negotiating the boundaries between social approbation and social criticism.

This conflicted authorial voice continues in two prefatory poetic apostrophes. These poems, "To the Public" and "To Critics," illustrate the social constraints educated women encountered in their intellectual pursuits.³²⁶ Sally's writings suggest that she longed for more than ideal "republican motherhood." She wed much earlier than her peers, just one month shy of her sixteenth birthday. The average age at which a woman married for the first time during the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of

³²⁶ This section primarily analyzes the poem "To Critics." I have included an interpretation of "To the Public" in the next chapter on the use of literary allusion in women's travel narratives.

age.³²⁷ By the age of twenty-one, Sally was already a mother to three children under the age of five. She married and had her children at a time when ideas about marriage and family life were changing. Americans began to sentimentalize childhood and value children as products of a loving marriage. Despite these evolving notions, most of the child care and domestic responsibilities would have fallen upon Sally's shoulders, just as she stood at the threshold of adulthood.

Poems such as the poetic apostrophes are an important aspect of Sally's story because they reveal her interest in matters that went beyond domesticity. Sally did not explicitly voice her opinion on the changing role of women in the new republic. But, her poetry tells us her views on topics such as motherhood and education. For example, in her work, "To Critics," she directly addresses the intellectual double standards early national women faced:

Just in the op'ning bud of youth,
The iron hand of fate,
Did crush her intellectual growth,
With more than ten-fold weight.

Secluded in an infant land,
Immers'd in household care,
Her tender wings could not expand,
Nor mental organs clear.³²⁸

Although domestic ideologies after the Revolution allowed for more female learning opportunities, a girl's education prepared her for domesticity—"an infant land" and "household

³²⁷ Susan Klepp, *Revolutionary Conceptions: Women, Fertility, and Family Limitations in American, 1760-1820* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 46.

³²⁸ SAH, 9.

care”—not economic or intellectual advancement.³²⁹ Sally lamented her destiny in her poem and used personification to contrast the invincible, powerful, and permanent “iron hand of fate” with her own delicate, flowering, and ephemeral “bud of youth.” Motherhood, in other words, effectively stunted her “intellectual growth” before it could fully mature.

Sally was obviously a learned woman. Despite her assertion in “To Critics,” that “Her Learning, in its prime” was merely “to read her Bible through,” her writings speak volumes to the contrary. They give evidence of an extremely literate woman who was conversant in a range of subjects, including philosophy, science, current events, religion, and classical antiquity. They also show a woman who is representative of this transitional period’s dynamism. As McMahon notes in *Mere Equals*, “a rapidly changing educational landscape” in the early republic led to an idiosyncratic learning experience for young women.³³⁰ There is no uniform experience to which we can refer, as historic records are sparse and incomplete. Sally may have attended the log school situated a few yards south of the Donegal Presbyterian meetinghouse. Or, like other genteel young girls, she may have gone to an area boarding school, private seminary, or academy. Most likely, she received some education at home and was schooled by some combination of these methods.³³¹

³²⁹ See Mary Kelley’s *Learning to Stand and Speak* for an analysis of women’s education and the links to civil society in the early years of the nation.

³³⁰ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 21.

³³¹ Ellis and Evans, 776; Ziegler, 20. The first school house building at the Donegal Presbyterian Church was built a few years after the church was constructed in 1732. Another school house was built “near the spring in Duffy’s Park” around 1750. An Irishman named Murphy was the teacher at this school before the Revolution. Ziegler notes that the Presbyterian school house was “an old log building situated a few yards south of the graveyard wall.”

We do know, however, that early national women wanted more serious educational opportunities. As Sally's defense of her writing in "To Critics" makes clear, she placed a high value on "Fair science" that "polishes the gem of genius." Any defect in her writings, she argues, occurs because she was "not polish'd like a gem" and regrettably did not have "twenty years at school."³³² Although we may not be able to determine the "how, when, and where" of Sally's educational journey, her writings are suggestive. The refined writing style and application of the period's complex poetic conventions demonstrate an emphasis on gentility and sociability. She most likely had schooling in music, art, drawing, dancing, etiquette, and other proper "ladylike" accomplishments. The varied intellectual content of her writing, as evidenced by her references to literature, philosophy, religion, and science, and her sophisticated rhetorical abilities reflect some schooling in a more rigorous curriculum.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, female boarding schools and academies for "young ladies" multiplied in the north and mid-Atlantic regions. These female academies were not limited to larger cities, but they also could be found in small towns, villages, and backwoods communities.³³³ The typical curriculum included English grammar and composition; spelling; reading and writing; French; arithmetic; and geography in addition to the domestic arts of sewing and needlework. In addition, some girls studied bookkeeping, history, grammar, and the classics, subjects deemed too masculine and unnecessary for women before the Revolution. One

³³² SAH, 9-10.

³³³ McMahan, *Mere Equals*, 21-22. McMahan notes that the quantification of women's educational history in the early republic period remains incomplete. There are no exact figures or statistics on the number of schools started for women or the number of women who attended them. Only fragmented attendance records exist. But, most historians, according to McMahan believe a "sea change" occurred in women's education at this time.

Pennsylvania backcountry educator, Robert Tait, who advertised in the *Carlisle Gazette* in 1785, illustrates this new emphasis on female education:

[Tait] proposes to teach the English and French Languages Grammatically. Also, Writing, Cyphering, and Bookkeeping, in all their Branches, and after the most approved manner, as now practiced in the principal Academies of Britain, some of which he formerly taught in... Young Ladies who chuse [sic] to study any of these branches, and have not already acquired them, may, (if they please) have separate hours for themselves.

Under his tutelage in the “convenient School-House, in the alley, near the Meeting-House” of Dickinson College, girls would have access to the same course of study as boys. Tait’s academic offerings reflect the growing interest among post-Revolutionary Americans to give boys and girls the skills needed to be participate in civic life.

As a result, literacy rates for white women rose dramatically in the early national period. Some historians estimate the increase to be over ninety percent during the first half of the nineteenth century.³³⁴ This extraordinary development can be attributed to two main ideological changes. First, a belief in the essential equality of women’s and men’s intellectual capabilities became more widespread. Second, more liberal expectations regarding national citizenship expanded for both genders in the wake of the Revolution. The confluence of these changing ideas powered the discourse on expanding women’s education. Educators and prescriptive writers repeatedly demanded recognition of women’s reasoning powers. As one male writer, signed “L.C.,” argued in *The Lady’s Weekly Miscellany* (1808), “As beings endowed with reason

³³⁴ Lucia McMahon and Deborah Shriver, eds. *To Read My Heart: The Journal of Rachel Van Dyke, 1810-1811* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2000), 313-314; McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 4-5.

and consequently capable of the highest degree of intellectual improvement, the female sex is in no respect inferior to our own.” Instead, the rhetorical focus shifted towards social practices: Any “discernable inferiority” of the “female mind,” according to L.C. came from an “improper mode of education and study” or “an inexcusable indulgence of parents.”³³⁵ As the conversation moved away from questioning whether women had intellectual capacity “equal” to men, it turned to “how” women should be educated and for “what” purposes.

Other ideological changes, however, mitigated women’s educational gains. A movement towards greater biological essentialism slowly crept into American culture through numerous disciplines and discourses, including science, philosophy, literature, and medicine.³³⁶ Social custom did not create gender differences, according to this emerging “science,” rather men and women were *innately* different in temperament and disposition. In particular, women were deemed to be more gentle, moral, and virtuous than men and thus better suited for domesticity. “Nature confirms it in a thousand shapes,” decreed a concerned citizen addressing female education in the *Carlisle Gazette* published September 9, 1785. “She can soften a heart of steel, moderate impetuosity, and alleviate, with her prudent conduct, whatever misfortune might befall a loving husband.” As evidenced by this writer, these evolving notions whereby women’s educational pursuits were linked to prescribed behaviors were becoming more common and virtually inescapable.

³³⁵ “Present Mode of Female Education Considered,” *Lady’s Weekly Miscellany* in *American Periodicals*. Several references in this article lead me to believe that L.C. is a male writer, including the sentence, “In our boyish days, what new delights, what added charms, have not their [women’s] attentions frequently given to our accustomed [sic] sports and pastimes?”

³³⁶ Kelley, *Revolutionary Backlash*, 7.

Women should pursue learning for domestic purposes insisted the male discourse. The obverse of this rhetoric, of course, was that women should not use their education to claim a public space. As L.C., the writer to *Lady's Weekly Miscellany*, insisted in 1808, "It is on the character and conduct of the fair sex that man must found his hopes of the aggregate of virtue and solid principle that is to be looked for in posterity." Although L.C. believed education would give women greater intellectual equality, he connected his argument to traditional gender roles: "It is woman that has the care, almost exclusively, of our younger years; and it is to woman principally that all eminently religious and good characters are primarily indebted for the origin and foundation of their subsequent greatness."³³⁷ Women's roles as wives and mothers, in other words, demanded that they be well-educated in order to mold their children (especially sons) and husbands into good citizens. Public display of intellectual capacity, therefore, was a gamble for women. On one side of the intellectual coin, they were encouraged to become useful through education. On the other side, they were discouraged from pursuing education for personal ambition.

This tension helps to explain Sally's conflicted authorial identity. She embraced the self-empowering benefits of education. Her constructed identity as a poet and narrator is one of an educated, accomplished woman. Women who publically exhibited their learning might be cast as vain and immodest. As a result, her words show a woman who is proud of her intellectual attainments and fearful of critical derision at the same time. In her prefatory poem "To Critics," Sally focused on male disapproval ("the man of books"):

³³⁷ L.C., "Present Mode of Female Education."

Pray, learned Critic, don't in haste
 The little Warbler fright:
 She's at your tribunal cast,
 'Twill disconcert her quite.

She makes no doubt, the man of books
 Will many faults detect;
 In grammar, and in 'hooks and crooks,'
 Will call her incorrect.³³⁸

Sally understood that public authorship exposed her to unfair and gender-biased scrutiny. Male critics would place her work under a microscope to find something in the “hooks and crooks” in order to diminish or dismiss its value. Although women received encouragement to improve their “mind,” Sally knew she needed to maintain modesty. Lucia McMahon and Deborah Shriver explain how educated women walked a precarious tightrope between learning too much and having too little learning. A woman who was poorly educated or exhibited a disinterest in intellectual activity was often viewed as frivolous and insincere. She might even be branded as a coquette. On the other hand, women shrank away from being labeled a “pedant.” Such an ostentatious display of knowledge would be seen as unfeminine, vain, and disingenuous.³³⁹ “For it is not knowledge, but it is the proper application of it,” a male writer reminded his readers on the dangers of learning not directed to improving “domestic happiness, social harmony, and universal respect.” An educated woman, he continued, should be “acquainted” with her “own powers, consequence, and influence in the scale of creation ... to become more dignified, and less aspiring, more elevated, and less haughty, more amiable, and

³³⁸ SAH, 8.

³³⁹ McMahon and Shriver, 311-312.

less trifling, more useful, and less capricious.”³⁴⁰ This opinion was typical of the prescribed literature. As McMahon notes, scores of articles were published warning women that too much female “intellectual ambition” was dangerous to the social order.

Sally responded to this discourse with both self-abnegation and self-affirmation. She declared in her preface poem, “The little Novice, who accosts/Your hearts, with wisdom fraught, /“No genius owns, no science boasts, /But what affliction taught.” This disavowal of her educational prowess was not unusual. Lucia McMahon finds, women feared male scorn; thus, they were reticent to express their love for learning in more public venues.³⁴¹ However, what does seem to be unusual about Sally’s writing is her satirical challenges to the tenets of proper feminine behavior including domesticity and submission. In “To Critics” she claimed, “no wild ambition” or “rage for whistling fame” compelled her to be a writer. But, in the following verses from the same poem, she defied the social constraints placed upon her creativity:

She sings, because her numbers do
Spontaneous fill her brain;
Which, lest her scull should overflow,
She shallows by her pen.

Then, she questioned the veracity and authority of male critics:

The man of parts, the man of none,
May here amusement find.
If he has wit, display his own:
If none, why study mine?³⁴²

³⁴⁰ “Present Mode of Female Education Considered,” *Lady’s Weekly Miscellany in American Periodicals Series (1740-1900)*.

³⁴¹ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 37.

³⁴² SAH, 9.

Sally's critique illustrates the dynamic tensions between republic motherhood standards and real life. As McMahon points out, the elevation of women to social guardians of public and private virtue led to a transformation of the "institutional landscape of women's education" by introducing more rigorous study and exposing women to new forms of knowledge and experience.³⁴³

For many women, education opened up a world that went beyond domesticity. They worked hard to improve their minds only to find old notions regarding male literary authority continued to limit their opportunity for public creativity and expression. The last section in this chapter extends this analysis to the travel narrative's prefatory justification "To the Public."

"A faultless Performance, I presume, is seldom to be found, even from the ablest Pens"

Sally starts her travel narrative with a direct address to her readers. The first paragraph of the preface gives an ostensibly apologetic justification for her work. This preface can be read as a defense for Sally's narrative. Aware that her authorial role diverged from accepted notions of feminine behavior, Sally protested that she did not intend her work to be published. As previously discussed, she claimed the text was "originally written at the Request...and for the Amusement, of a highly respected Lady." She continued to develop the accidental narrator position by stating that her notes "... are now offered to the Public, in compliance with the joint Solicitations of a number of Persons, of the first Character, who have honored me with a particular and very disinterested Friendship." Furthermore, to maintain her womanly virtue, she

³⁴³ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 27.

feigned modesty by calling her narrative a “Performance ... at best, insipid and trifling.”³⁴⁴ On the surface, these statements do seem to be a response to criticism and an attempt to authenticate her expertise, as well as reinforce the moral integrity of her tale for her readers.

However, a reduction of the preface to this one reading obscures other possible appeals. I would argue that Sally is not apologizing but is asking for acceptance of her work as a creative piece (as opposed to a purely factual rendition) written by a woman. First of all, the way in which her second paragraph obliquely challenged the accepted notions of female authorship points to this interpretation. She begins, “A faultless Performance, I presume, is seldom to be found, even from the ablest Pens, and under the most favorable Circumstances.”³⁴⁵ Sally did not concede presumed inferiority in this statement. On the contrary, her assertion suggested that there was no differentiation between her work and the “ablest of Pens,” an allusion to male writers.

She then bravely and metaphorically praised her talents as “weeds luxuriant:”

I conceive it possible for an Author to be very correct and methodical; and, withal, exceedingly dull. The same energy of Mind, which is required to enable an Author to write with Spirit, frequently, through Defect of human Judgment, leads him into glaring errors.

As weeds luxuriant in rich Pastures grow;
So, from the richest Source, rank Errors flow.³⁴⁶

The use of the male pronoun “Him” is telling—an “Author” was presumed to be a man. By dismissing her errors as merely “weeds” growing in “rich Pastures,” Sally audaciously upended

³⁴⁴ SAH, 175.

³⁴⁵ SAH, 176.

³⁴⁶ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

traditional thinking by elevating her feminine “Spirit,” or intellect, to the same plane as a “very correct and methodical” male mind.

Sally’s preface subversively undercuts a key warrant holding up public authorship as a male enterprise. In the Early Republic, reasoned thinking was assigned primarily to men. Keeping this dynamic in mind allows us to reach a better understanding of early American women’s writings like Sally’s travel narrative. As Martha Tomhave Blauvelt notes, “men have had the power to decide that women are emotional and men rational [and] to define the meaning and worth of those characteristics.”³⁴⁷ Sally both refutes the assumed superior worth of rationality (an author can “be very correct and methodical” but “exceedingly dull”) and simultaneously demonstrates her own reasoned thinking.

A closer look at the prefatory address shows that Sally was setting her readers up for a narrative of creative self-presentation. Despite her later assertion that she would “relate Occurrences, unadorned, as they take place,” the preface suggests something less “true.” It is her personal interpretation of the journey that propels the narrative, not a “correct and methodical” plot. Such a straightforward (and presumably male-oriented narrative) would make the story “exceedingly dull,” Sally noted.³⁴⁸ Of particular interest, Sally does not “sign” the narrative preface with her name as she does on the title page. Instead, she ended the preface with the gendered anonymous title, “THE AUTHORESS.” This convention, a means of class

³⁴⁷ Martha Tomhave Blauvelt, *The Work of the Heart: Young Women and Emotion, 1780-1830* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press), 2.

³⁴⁸ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

differentiation, was commonly used by both genteel men and women. The device also allowed Sally to construct multiple characters for herself.

The third paragraph of the preface highlights this idea. Sally was more concerned with staging identities for herself: her narrator is a genteel adventurer who will “encounter every Difficulty, which naturally arose from the situation;” is “the fatigued Traveller,” an implied outside observer “in a mountainous Country;” and is a helpmeet burdened with the “Care of a numerous Family.”³⁴⁹ These characterizations, placed *before* the narrative, engender sympathy from her audience. In claiming these different voices, Sally established reader identification with her plight and situation. She gave a voice to women writers who were traditionally excluded from the public discourse of travel.

Sally’s writings should not be read as an early feminist protest against existing inequalities. Her writings illuminate the ways in which individual women felt constrained and sought recognition within a socially inequitable system. Sally was acquainted with the scientific, religious, and philosophical discourses regarding women’s intellect. Other women, such as American essayist Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820) and English feminist Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) wrote more openly about intellectual equality between the sexes. Sally was most likely familiar with and probably read at least parts of Wollstonecraft’s extremely popular but controversial manifesto *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). Popular on both sides of the Atlantic, “Mrs. Wolstencraft’s Wrights of Women” was even cited on a backcountry Pennsylvania bookseller’s list by 1801, inconspicuously tucked in between a volume on the life

³⁴⁹ SAH, 175.

of Voltaire and the Constitution of the United States.³⁵⁰ Wollstonecraft popularized the expression “women’s rights” and explicitly applied the idea of universal natural rights to women.³⁵¹ She argued that women were not innately inferior to men but that “the education and situation of woman, at present, shuts her out” from intellectual equality and self-sufficiency.³⁵² Women desired more education for their own self-improvement and personal fulfillment, an idea popularized in women’s print culture such as Philadelphia’s the *Lady’s Magazine*.

Wollstonecraft’s plea for a more equitable educational system for women parallels Sally’s response on the topic. Like Wollstonecraft, who argued, “in youth their [women’s] faculties are not brought forward by emulation; and having no serious scientific study, if they have natural sagacity it is turned too soon on life and manners,”³⁵³ Sally similarly recognized women’s intellectual inferiority as a social construct (see Wollstonecraft’s title page in fig. 21). Sally purposely remarked in “To Critics,” “The little Novice, who accosts/Your hearts, with wisdom fraught, /No genius owns, no science boasts, /But what affliction taught.”³⁵⁴ In language that echoed Wollstonecraft, Sally pointed out that women were “taught” to act, think, and behave

³⁵⁰ “Advertisement,” *Oracle of Dauphin County*, March 30, 1801, vol. X, issue XXII. Marion Rust confirms the relatively wide availability of Wollstonecraft’s work in the United States. She states that by 1794, *A Vindication* had been published in Philadelphia and Boston and was advertised at the back of many early American novels. She estimates that about 30 percent of libraries in America also had the work during its first years of publication (86).

³⁵¹ Zagari, 41.

³⁵² Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, 3rd ed. (London: J. Johnson, 1796), vii.

³⁵³ Wollstonecraft, 41-42.

³⁵⁴ SAH, 8.

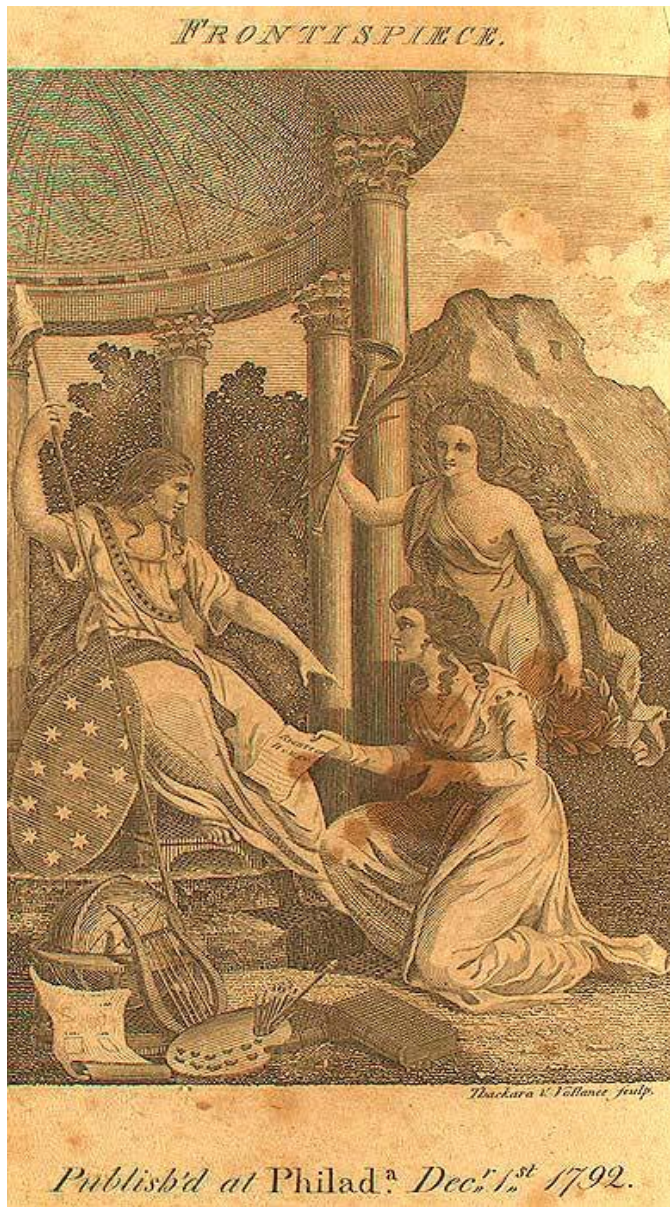


Figure 21. Frontispiece and title page from *The Lady's Magazine, and Repository of Entertaining Knowledge*, 1792.

The frontispiece from the first issue of this woman's journal depicts the "Genius of the Ladies magazine" presenting Liberty with a copy of Mary Wollstonecraft's "Vindication of the Rights of Women" and beseeching her for help. The editors of this women's journal wished to engage female intellect, as suggested by the symbols of a woman's education: the artist's palette, a manuscript, and a lyre below the figure of Liberty. This illustration provides evidence of early national women's own desire for more education as a means of personal fulfillment and improvement. *Source:* The Library of Congress.

in less serious ways. How could she be expected to compete with male writers when she did not have the same training and education?

As Rosemarie Zagarri recognizes, “The period between the American Revolution and the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 appears to be nothing more than a frustrating hiatus in the development of women’s rights. Important changes in the popular discourse about women’s rights have been overlooked or ignored.”³⁵⁵ Texts like Sally Anderson Hastings’ book written and published during this critical period can help fill some of the gaps in the post-Revolutionary period when men and women “sought to define—and ultimately to limit and restrict—the expansive ideals that they had so successfully employed against Britain.”³⁵⁶ Since so few women from the mid-Atlantic region published works at this time, Sally’s story becomes even more valuable to scholars looking to piece together the course of gender construction in the first post-Revolutionary generation.

This chapter has demonstrated how the prefatory materials and epistolary framework of Sally’s narrative reveal the challenges women writers faced. Like other early national women writers, she creatively employed literary convention to respond to attacks on her authorship and intellectual ability. The contradictory nature of the prefatory matter illuminates the contradictory messages women received regarding their education and prescribed roles as wives and mothers. On the surface, Sally’s counter to male criticism seems to be apologetic and defensive. A closer reading of her introductory materials shows a multi-layered subversive challenge to the social and cultural constraints placed on her as a writer and a traveler. Through these devices, Sally

³⁵⁵ Zagarri, 3.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

prepares the reader for a text that presents a woman with an experience outside the domestic sphere. At the same time, she begins the complex mixing of genres, including poetry, letter-writing, and novelistic forms, which suggests her text will be more than an instructive, didactic rendering of her journey. I explore this intertextuality further in the next chapter by looking at Sally's creative use of literary allusion and novelistic techniques to elide social criticism.

Chapter Five: Literary Crossings: Novels, Allusion, and Travel Writing

Sally's day on October 27 proved to be an especially unsettling one. A military parade the day before had generated excitement in the small mountain community of Greensburg. About one hundred log houses dotted the landscape, giving it a charming but rustic appearance. Crowds gathered in the streets and taverns to socialize and celebrate. Sally nervously observed that "The Town was full of riotous People." This troublesome situation worsened the next day when the reviewing soldiers, "Officers of the Battalions," decided to "refresh" themselves at the same place where the Hastings' party was lodging. Spirituous liquors flowed freely at the inn. Drunken revelry among the officers ensued. Sally wryly noted that the soldiers were at "once solemn, splendid, and ludicrous." With a mix of admiration and disapproval, she complained that "every Man, except the Landlord, was intoxicated." The inebriated soldiers grew more rowdy as the evening progressed. "Their Spirits, which seemed naturally haughty and martial, became extremely irritable. Being of different political Opinions, Argument soon became ardent," Sally wrote. An alarming mêlée soon followed that "produced...a medley of Anarchy and Confusion." Sally and her startled companions "could not wholly conceal their fear" when they "saw the glitter of Swords" and heard "the clashing of them [swords]" over their heads.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷ SAH, October 27, 1800, 202-203. In 1800, with the exception of a brick courthouse and stone jail, the houses in Greensburg were made of log and clapboard siding. Traveler F.A. Micheaux noted in his 1802 account, "Greensburg contains about one hundred houses. The town is built upon the summit of a hill on the road from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh." Quoted in *The History of Greensburg, 1799-1949* (Greensburg, Pa: Westmoreland County Historical Society, 1949), 11-13.

This excerpt exemplifies the larger connections between storytelling and travel writing. Sally, for example, is a central character in her narrative, and her account unfolds as a series of events. As evidenced by her October 27th account, she constructs compelling mini narrative arcs to relate her experiences. Over the course of eleven paragraphs, Sally does more than just present facts and data. She builds drama and suspense by framing the account of the brawling soldiers with an allusion to Milton's classic biblical allegory, *Paradise Lost*:

The principal Excellence belonged not to him who spoke best, but to him who spoke loudest and most...the more unintelligible they became, the more Vociferation had they recourse to; until, finding their voices produced no better effect, than if they were shouting to a Whirlwind...suddenly dropping their Arguments—they seized their Swords, and appeared as terrific as MILTON's Devils! And 'Confusion' became 'worse confounded.'³⁵⁸

This metaphorical comparison of backcountry disorder to the dark, chaotic world of *Paradise Lost* was entertaining. It brought important symbolism to Sally's story. It was artistic.

Sally's melding of genres and aesthetics brings into sharp focus the creative intertextuality of women's travel accounts. As her narrative makes clear, the flow of cultural ideas and literary material from across the Atlantic did not stop after the Revolution. References to British philosophical, scientific, religious, and classical works reinforced women's identities as genteel American citizens. At the same time, Anglo-American fictional genres, such as the romance and picaresque novel, served as structural models for their accounts. This "more imaginative" framework, as Imbarrato explains, distinguishes women's narratives "from texts that represent experience solely within a data driven, empirical framework."³⁵⁹ Historians have

³⁵⁸ SAH, October 27, 1800, 202-203.

³⁵⁹ Imbarrato, 152. Cox, 105-106. Cox explains that nineteenth-century travel narratives can be placed into one of two types. One type is "informational" with an absent narrator and

demonstrated that women drew upon fictional forms and literary allusion to help make sense of their experiences and to define their positions within those worlds.³⁶⁰ This literary approach also shows how women viewed themselves as social and cultural arbiters.

Yet, Sally's adaptation of literary allusion is perplexing. Why does she use conventional modes to tell her unconventional story? How can she both reinforce and violate genteel standards of behavior, as she does as a central character in her own story? Why does Sally cite male authors to lay claim to her female experience? In this chapter, I use Sally's account as a paradigmatic example to explore these questions by looking at the interplay of women's literary worlds, travel, and self-representation. First, I look at popular sentimental novels and the interaction between reading and women's travel writing. This chapter also explores how Sally creatively drew upon the quest motif and novelistic characterization to fashion her identity as both a sentimental and a picaresque archetype. I argue that this intertextuality enabled women to surreptitiously control their narratives despite patriarchal constraints. It allowed them to simultaneously elide public censure and uphold their genteel status.

“Adieu, my native land, adieu!”

The rawness of Sally's emotional state is expressed in conventional sentimental language in her narrative. This clichéd and overly-dramatic language seems strangely unmoving and

“objective” ahistorical content. The other type “foregrounds the narrator” and is “experiential,” or presents the content through personal experience. Women's narratives tend to fall into the latter type.

³⁶⁰ Imbarrato, 152; Cox, 107-110.

remote to modern-day readers. Instead of a more true-to-life rendering of her departure, the heart-rending farewell at the beginning of the narrative, for example, might have been lifted from the pages of a contemporary romance novel.

Sally's allusion to popular sentimental literature, however, is not odd or peculiar. As a genteel woman, the sensitive nature of her departure would have required a veiled performance. We can presume that her removal to the west created tensions within her circle of family and friends. She also would have been burdened by the larger social stigma attached to women who were divorced or separated. Sally decided to write about her situation for publication! How could she reveal such unsettling and troubling content and maintain her respectability? As Marion Rust points out, women writers did risk public censure. She explains how both novelist Susanna Rowson and the feminist essayist Mary Wollstonecraft were "savagely humiliated" in print for their "mannish insistence on a place in the public sphere of letters."³⁶¹ To avoid a similar public thrashing, Sally would need to "domesticate" her work through convention. The sentimental novel offered a model from which Sally could borrow that would be more socially acceptable and allow for publication of a compelling travel narrative written by a woman. Simultaneously, Sally normalized both female authorship and female travel through her personal example.³⁶²

³⁶¹ Rust, 87.

³⁶² Cathy N. Davidson, in *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Nina Baym, in *American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790-1860* (Rutgers University Press, 1995); Mary Kelley in *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth Century America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), and other literary historians have shown how nineteenth-century women used domesticity and their roles as moral guardians as a means to develop cultural and social authority and influence. Middle-class Americans came to accept women novelists who used the genre as an educational and reformist vehicle. Pratt, 103. However, while women were

As discussed in the previous chapter, women travelers negotiated twin boundaries of venturing into both public spaces and female authorship. They breached the masculine world of travel writing by referring to literary authority and keeping within (at least superficially) private modes of writing. Sally's Pennsylvania's backcountry narrative, similar to most romantic fiction of the time, employed an epistolary structure. It was instructive. And, it provided moral lessons. Hence, Sally informed her readers that the journey away from home would strengthen her character as she became "familiarized with Adversity."³⁶³ The literary allusion to a heroine like Eliza Wharton in Hannah Foster's popular *The Coquette* (1797) guided her readers into a mutually understood sympathetic identification with her plight. But, it also pulled her narrative back into domesticity. Throughout the narrative, Sally gives advice, pronounces judgment on people and places, and models prescribed behavior—carefully moving between public and private spheres.

However, the stories in *Family Tour to the West* are simultaneously revealed and concealed. Readers are left to make conjectures about Sally's experiences and draw conclusions from her carefully chosen allusions. Excitement, danger, peril, risk, sorrow, romance, and disorder—Sally cloaked these moments of intense emotion under the melodramatic cover of sentimental language. To give voice to the sadness of her farewell, for instance, Sally inserted a verse "The Lovers," a poem by contemporary Scottish preacher John Logan (1748-1788):³⁶⁴

authorized to create novels, their access to travel writing, as Pratt argues in *Imperial Eyes*, "remained even more limited than their access to travel itself."

³⁶³ SAH, October 7, 1800, 177.

³⁶⁴ John Veitch, *The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1893), 272.

‘O hills! O Vales! Where I have stray’d:
 Ye woods that wrapt me in your shade;
 O scenes I’ve often wander’d o’er’
 O scenes I shall behold no more;
 I take a long, last, ling’ring view—
 Adieu, my native land, adieu!’³⁶⁵

Logan’s poem, structured as a dialogue between two star-crossed lovers, Harriet and Henry, is romantic and brooding. The themes of longing and exile imagined in the verse feel clichéd to modern-day readers. However, genteel nineteenth-century readers would have understood how the verse stood in for Sally’s own fragmented domestic situation.

Sally’s sentimental self-writing, therefore, was a communication interface—a common boundary—that became a crossing point of mutual understanding between herself and her readers. Quoting sentimental poets, according to Martha Tomhave Blauvelt, was a component of sensibility’s “distinctive language,” as it “captured what [women] struggled to say ... [and] ... illustrated their familiarity with sentimental favorites.”³⁶⁶ However, as Sally’s narrative demonstrates, her adaptation of this “intimate” fictional voice also created an authorial distance. Are we reading about Sally—the real person? Or, are we reading about Sally—the imagined sentimental heroine?

The literary conundrum presented in Sally’s narrative illustrates the porous boundaries between novels and travel writing. Despite our modern-day impulse to categorize literary genres, this undertaking can be a sticky proposition. With regards to eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century novels and travel narratives, the task becomes even more problematic. First,

³⁶⁵ SAH, October 7, 1800, 179.

³⁶⁶ Blauvelt, 31.

the eighteenth-century “novel” emerged at the same time that travel narratives gained in popularity, and second, modern-day labeling to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction arrived later.³⁶⁷ Thus, it is not surprising that there is an intersection between invention and imagination and reality and “fact” in both genres. Percy G. Adams was one of the first to bring this notion to the forefront in his *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (1983).

More recent historians have added to our understanding of this intertextuality and made similar connections. In his study of European seventeenth-century travel accounts, Antoine Eche finds that fiction was a generally accepted “salient feature” of travel writing: “There is no opposition in the construction of an imaginary geography and the referential ambition of a travel narrative, as it is well established that the separation between fiction and factual writing is purely theoretical.”³⁶⁸ In regards to early women travel writers, Clare Broome Saunders also sees a blurring of the lines between the two genres: “Whereas the terms ‘fiction’ and ‘non-fiction’ may suggest a clear distinction between the imaginary and the true, in travel writing generic boundaries begin to unravel.”³⁶⁹ And Imbarrato cites both Cathy N. Davidson and Mary Suzanne Schriber in her assertion that early American women writers were *not* doing something outside the norm. Rather, they were participating in travel writing’s well-established tradition of

³⁶⁷ Imbarrato, 132.

³⁶⁸ Antoine Eche, “The Shores of Aphrodite’s Island,” in *Geocritical Explorations: Space, Place, and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. Robert T. Tally, Jr. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 95.

³⁶⁹ Clare Broome Saunders, ed. *Women, Travel Writing, and Truth* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

integrating literary allusion with exploration and observation.³⁷⁰ Sally's narrative, therefore, provides opportunities to study the shared historiography of these two genres.

Likewise, Sally's novelistic adaptations give insight into her reading habits. As Imbarrato notes, "the travel narrative serves as a rich source for discovering what women were reading and how they interacted with those readings."³⁷¹ Previous scholars of Sally's work have noted the religious, classical, and belletristic references found in her writings. It is obvious Sally enjoyed reading a variety of texts on different subjects, and I will explore these references later in this chapter. However, no one has examined her interaction with the popular literature of the time, notably romance and picaresque novels (sentimental fiction). This oversight leads to misconceptions regarding Sally's relationship with print culture. At first glance, it may appear that Sally formed her values and ideas about behavior from reading primarily religious, didactic and instructive literature and British canonized standards. As historian A. U. Hensel remarked in 1906, Sally's writing "indicates a devotional frame of mind rather than a wide range of classic learning or reading."³⁷² A deeper look at her poetry and narrative, however, contradicts this assessment. In fact, her travel account reveals an engagement with sentimental fiction that suggests she also read novels.

Sally's writing style choices make it clear that she was influenced by novels. As noted earlier, the epistolary structure she used is comparable to the letter form used in popular fiction such as Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette*. This episodic approach draws readers into the

³⁷⁰ Imbarrato, 133.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Hensel, 373.

plot as it unfolds, and it is very reader responsive. Suspense develops in the epistolary mode, Catherine Kerrison explains, because the reader becomes part of the “private” missive exchange among the novel’s characters. Pathos builds as the reader eavesdrops on the action, and the reading experience feels very intimate.³⁷³ For example, on top of the mountain in Huntingdon County, Sally’s direct address to her “Madam” and use of the personal third person voice (“we” and “our”) heightens the drama of the party’s improvised romantic picnic. “We have made a delightful Breakfast, somewhat in Imitation of the Turkish mode; but differing in this particular: Our Forms and Carpets were of Nature’s manufacturing,” Sally divulged.³⁷⁴

But, at the same time, the “episodic” letters feel fragmentary—giving only a sketch of what is happening. Readers must use their imagination to flesh out the details of Sally’s genteel “Turkish” breakfast and its allusion to the fashionable world of classicism and the Orient by drawing upon similar settings from their own experience or more likely from their reading of sentimental fiction and classical works. As Caroline Winterer notes, even women of more modest means were familiar with classical themes, history, and literature. They especially engaged with Greek and Turkish culture in their reading. Alexander Pope’s poetic interpretations of Homer, in particular, were very accessible to women. Pope’s works also meshed well with Christian morality and early republican womanhood ideals.³⁷⁵ These shared reading experiences formed a collaborative relationship between the writer and the reader.

³⁷³ Catherine Kerrison, *Claiming the Pen: Women and Intellectual Life in the Early American South* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 133.

³⁷⁴ SAH, October 13, 1800, 189.

³⁷⁵ Winterer, 27-31.

In addition to her epistolary framework, words that were stock terms from novels fill the pages of her narrative. “Sympathetic friendship,” “Child of Misfortune,” “enthusiastic Sensibilities,” “Feelings,” “excellent Heart:” Sally peppered her narrative with these sentimental phrases. As Mary Kelley notes, women at this time “moved back and forth between print and manuscript, manuscript and print.”³⁷⁶ They borrowed forms, words, and phrases from the literature they read and casually incorporated these modes into their own writings.

The mode of punctuation Sally employed throughout her book also derives in part from sentimental fiction. The following quote is an example of Sally’s emotive response to the beauty of the Alleghenies: “Here is wild—wild, beyond the reach of Description...Above, Mountains seem heaped on Mountains, whose cloud-capt summits threaten, in proud defiance, even the Heavens themselves!”³⁷⁷ As she did in this instance, Sally frequently used the exclamation point and the dash, a novelistic device, to imbue her voice with extreme emotion. Despite her early disclaimer that “Her Learning ... Is just to read her Bible through,” Sally obviously enjoyed reading other literature, including popular fiction.

Sally’s fictional interests point to the transatlantic nature of America’s literary world. Many of the sentimental novels Americans enjoyed came from Britain and were recopied in the United States. Sally directly cites Laurence Sterne’s picaresque standard *Tristram Shandy* (1760), and she alludes to Tobias Smollett’s *Peregrine Pickle* (1751) and epistolary romance novels such as American Hannah Webster Foster’s *The Coquette* (1797). It is reasonable to assume that Sally’s family had these works sitting on a bookcase in the home. In addition to their private

³⁷⁶ Mary Kelley, “In the Need of Their Genius,” 2-4.

³⁷⁷ Blauvelt, 31-32.

libraries, genteel families like the Clarks and Andersons would have obtained reading materials from one of Lancaster's many booksellers. Marion Rust observes that maritime cities, such as Boston and Philadelphia, more than doubled in size between 1790 and 1820. The print market expanded rapidly in these urban areas, as did reading clubs, literary circles, and circulating libraries.³⁷⁸

Sally's Lancaster County home site placed her in close proximity to Philadelphia. In 1800, Philadelphia was the nation's "premier city" and "political, economic, and cultural center," according to Billy G. Smith. Commerce enervated every part of the city's economic life. Philadelphia's waterfront areas teemed with shipping vessels laden with manufactured items from Europe and other parts of the Atlantic. Local traders and farmers transported the imported items to various parts of the state.³⁷⁹ Books would have been among the thousands of goods loaded onto the horse-drawn wagons bound for interior sections. In addition, by 1794, the first extended paved road in the nation, the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Road, opened and facilitated the transport of goods (and people) to the West.³⁸⁰ Lancaster therefore was ideally situated for the regional book market distribution that characterized the early national period.³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ Rust, 80-81.

³⁷⁹ Billy G. Smith, ed. *Life in Early Philadelphia: Documents From the Revolutionary and Early National Period* (University Park: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 3-6.

³⁸⁰ "Chapter One: Early Turnpikes and the Old State Road" in "Crossing the Alleghenies," *ExplorePAhistory.com*, last modified 2011, <http://explorepahistory.com/story.php?storyId=1-9-A&chapter=1>. The Turnpike opened in 1794 and stretched for more than sixty miles between Lancaster and Philadelphia. It would become a major commercial route servicing the east coast and the west.

³⁸¹ See Rosalind Remer, *Printers and Men of Capital: Philadelphia Book Publishers in the New Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).

The latest popular novels from British and American writers were very accessible. They regularly appeared in local bookstores hundreds of miles from the east coast. Backcountry bookseller George Kline's inventory that appeared in the January 2, 1793, issue of *The Carlisle Gazette* was typical. He listed several well-known sentimental works, including the epistolary novels William Hill Brown's *Power of Sympathy* (1789) and Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771), as well as Ann Radcliffe's moody gothic novel *Romance of the Forest* (1791). The circulation of the novels did not stop with the original buyer. Blauvelt notes, as a reflection of the owner's "elegance and gentility," sentimental books found their way into many hands, as they were widely shared among friends and family.³⁸² No longer limited to more cosmopolitan areas like Philadelphia, works of fiction entered the homes of more and more middling and upper-class families.

Despite warnings against fiction, America's female readers avidly consumed them. Even before the end of the Revolution, young women preferred to take their behavioral cues and cultural understandings from fiction rather than prescribed literature. As an irritable letter-writer to the *Carlisle Gazette* observed in the September 1, 1785, issue, "How shocking...it is to consider, that many of our modern young ladies are deficient [in their education]! That their knowledge should extend no further than the documents of a novel."³⁸³ Criticism directed at novels reflected the double-standard women faced. Fiction was viewed as a problem because it conflicted with ideas that women's reading materials should be wholly instructive. At the very least, critics complained that novels were indulgent and frivolous; at the most, they argued that

³⁸² Blauvelt, 21.

³⁸³ Editorial, *Carlisle Gazette*, September 1, 1785, *America's Historical Newspapers*.

novels were morally dangerous.³⁸⁴ Courtship, marriage, and male deception were principal themes in virtually every novel. These were the very aspects that made novels so appealing to young women. “Novel reading enabled women to examine the significance of courtship and marriage in their own lives,” according to Lucia McMahon.³⁸⁵ Holding a novel in their hands was like holding up a mirror. Female readers saw reflections of themselves in the female protagonists and identified with the domestic situations.³⁸⁶

Novels, however, presented topsy-turvy worlds in which social norms were inverted. Companionate marriage and expectations of marital happiness were challenged in the plots. Male figures, the traditional voices of authority, were often depicted as licentious and untrustworthy. Heroines were not meek and submissive but relied on their own intelligence and abilities. Typically, these stories centered on a young woman “in peril.” The heroine in British-American novelist Susanna Rowson’s very popular *Charlotte Temple* (1791), for example, is courted, seduced, and eventually abandoned by a man who falsely appears to be honorable and well-intentioned. Tragic endings, in which the disgraced woman usually dies alone, imparted a

³⁸⁴ Cynthia A. Kierner, *The Contrast: Manners, Morals, and Authority in the Early American Republic* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 10-11.

³⁸⁵ McMahon, *Mere Equals*, 60.

³⁸⁶ There is a vast amount of scholarship that looks at the role of novels in women’s lives. See previously noted Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word* (1986) and Mary Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage* (1984), as well as the following seminal works: Jane Tompkins *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) and Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984). For a more recent work, see Kerrison, *Claiming the Pen*, 106. Kerrison argues that the role of fiction in a woman’s education remains an understudied area. She urges us to “rethink our concept of a curriculum’s texts to include novels and their core teachings about life and love, virtue and debasement, triumph and disaster.”

strong message to female readers about the need to maintain virtue and guard their chastity against duplicitous rogues and cads. Although novels presented messages that upheld sexual double-standards, they also authorized female readers to question traditional authority and norms. Rust argues, Susanna Rowson developed an uncanny ability to play with a variety of forms, including plays, songs, and books, to secure a public voice.³⁸⁷

In this way, novels were freeing. They offered exciting alternatives to prescribed reading materials. In her analysis, Sheila L. Skemp stresses the role of imagination in novel reading. “Books allowed girls to imagine different options, to try out a variety of identities, to entertain myriad possibilities, and to recognize the significance of the mundane reality of their own lives,” Skemp writes.³⁸⁸ Contemporary discourse about novel reading centered on this subversive aspect. Some critics contended that novels were morally corrupt. These arguments tended to focus on the melodrama, lurid sexual situations, and extreme emotion that characterized the stories. For example, in a letter addressed “To the Fair Sex” in *The Philadelphia Minerva* in 1798, “Timothy Touchstone,” cautioned, “Novels raise the passions to an enormous pitch; they influence them, and even beget the breast of the reader an ardour [sic] which is wholly foreign and unnatural. . . . Love, envy, ambition, anger, covetousness, falsehood, suspicion, and all the ranker passions are roused by the vicious alluring tales of imagination.” As Touchstone recognized, fiction’s power rested in its liminality. Then, as now, writers captured the minds of

³⁸⁷ Rust, 38.

³⁸⁸ Sheila L. Skemp, *First Lady of Letters: Judith Sargeant Murray and the Struggle for Female Independence* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 26.

their young female readers with their ability to blur the lines between reality and make-believe.³⁸⁹

As such, novels challenged the status quo on different levels. Kerrison explains, “In exposing men as predators rather than protectors, the novels implicitly and explicitly critiqued the double standard from which all women suffered. ... To seek out and read novels, then, was to engage in resistance, as men well understood and sought to suppress.”³⁹⁰ Although the novels’ lessons implicitly upheld sexual double-standards, the very act of reading them was self-empowering. In her assessment of the novel’s appeal, Nina Baym asserts, “They gratify the self; ... gratify by excitement ...; [and] ... The mind becomes ungovernable.” Novels foster self-love and self-assertion, according to Baym, thereby endangering “the agencies of social and psychological control.”³⁹¹

Novel reading stokes the fires of possibility in the minds of readers. In particular, fiction gave young female readers new ways of thinking—thinking that undermined traditional authority. Given the contemporary discourse against novels, we can see why Sally emphasized the veracity of her narrative. It “relates Occurrences unadorned,” she reassured her readers in the preface.³⁹² Nevertheless, like the novels, Sally’s narrative allowed readers to imagine alternatives to womanhood. She summoned female readers into her tale of adventure with a

³⁸⁹ Timothy Touchstone, “To the Fair Sex,” *The Philadelphia Minerva* (June 9, 1798) in *American Periodicals*.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid*; Kerrison, 110.

³⁹¹ Nina Baym, *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1985), 39.

³⁹² SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

gendered address to a fictional woman—a *madam*. “I purpose to write you a familiar Journal of our Peregrination Westward...,” she beckoned her female readers with an intimation of the exciting exploits to follow. And she delivers. Paralleling the examples set by sentimental heroines, Sally acted independently and rationally to overcome danger and adversity throughout her narrative. By challenging assumptions regarding ideal womanhood, Sally likely inspired other women to similarly evaluate their own lives.

That being said, I believe this agency can be turned back onto Sally herself. The ways in which Sally chipped away at established attitudes regarding male and female characteristics echoes the plots found in sentimental fiction. Sally’s October 13 entry, for instance, sheds light on how novel reading may have empowered her own literary expression. That evening Sally turned a sardonic eye towards a motley collection of male lodgers. Her description elicits an image of a noisy, crowded inn. Loud banter and raucous laughter must have filled the room as each visitor tried to outdo the others with likely ribald conversation. Sally found their travel tales to be dull and impolite and mockingly dubbed her fellow lodgers as “Demi-politicians, antiquarian Story-tellers, and quibbling Humorists.”³⁹³

She framed the scorn with her own rational intellectualism. Using the language of “reason” and sentiment found in novels, she mediated the critique with a neoclassical poem. In the first eight lines, Sally set up the masculine setting using a scathingly sarcastic tone:

Sick of those silly vehicles of thought
 (With hackney’d jokes and cobweb fancies fraught)
 Of wond’rous tales, sarcasms, and grimace,
 And ev’ry sly vicissitude of face;
 Where flippant Coxcombs ape the fire of Wit,

³⁹³ SAH, October 13, 1800, 190.

And grinning Rudeness compliments the Cit;
Where Dullness drops the unfeeling Jest, severe,
And bleeding Sensibility—a Tear.³⁹⁴

She was clearly unimpressed by what she perceived as the male guests' boorish performance. Their "hackney'd jokes," "cobweb fancies," "wond'rous tales," and "sly vicissitude" did not measure up to the refined behavior found in the conduct literature. But, it is her expressions that echo the anxieties about male deception frequently voiced in sentimental fiction. "Coxcombs" and "Cits," the grossly conspicuous and showy men in her depiction are stock characters in romantic novels.³⁹⁵ In contrast, Sally surreptitiously called attention to her own rational sensibility in this situation: her heart was "bleeding Sensibility," and she was brought to "a Tear."

She does not stop there in challenging the social order. Sally juxtaposed a rational feminine world against the chaotic masculine backwoods setting in the same poem:

Where blushing Modesty her Veil assumes,
And coy reluctant Genius seldom comes—
O let me seek the consecrated bow'rs,
Where fairy-fingered Fancy paints the flow'rs;
Where young Imagination's wings expand,
And mystic Worlds arise at her command.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ SAH, October 13, 1800, 190.

³⁹⁵ Samuel Johnson, in *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1828), defined a "Coxcomb" as a "superficial pretender to knowledge" and a "Cit," an abbreviation of "citizen" or "freeman," as a "pert low citizen; an assuming, over-forward, or impertinent person."

³⁹⁶ SAH, October 13, 1800, 190.

Sally confronted the biased attitudes regarding female intellect. The very fact that she needed to cloak her “Genius,” in a “Veil” of modesty reveals the suppression women felt in their ability to make intellectual contributions. “Mystic worlds” arising at “her command,” Sally imagined within the established confines of domesticity. “There let me wander, pensive and alone,” Sally beseeched later in the verse. These lines conjure up romantic images of sentimental fiction’s solitary heroines who tested the conventions of their time. Whether Sally found direct authorial empowerment from novels cannot be definitively known. However, her literary allusions certainly suggest a symbiotic relationship between her readings and her creativity.

The didactic nature of women’s writings also reveals the impact of their novel reading. As Imbarrato notes, novels modeled behavior for women, but women’s travel narratives and letters show how they applied these behaviors. Sentimental fiction mirrored the concerns real women had in their own lives—marriage, courtship, friendship, and child-rearing were central to the plots. Marriage, in particular, was an anxiety-provoking issue. Although companionate marriage gave women more freedom in choosing their husbands, they had much more to lose than men if the marriage soured. Women were literally dependent on their husbands economically and socially in a way that men did not experience. In addition, their physical and emotional well-being resided in their ability to wisely pick a husband. Sentimental novels emphasized the woman’s responsibility to make the right choices in these matters.

Indeed, Sally’s own marital discord reflected the horrible consequences of making a bad choice. The impetuous decision she made as a naïve young girl to marry an older man with a checkered past confirmed the lessons women read about in novels. This reality may have prompted Sally to question the authority of the Reverend William Kerr (1777-1823), the distinguished minister of Donegal Presbyterian Church at the time, on this topic in an 1811 letter

to her half-sister, Eliza Clark. Sally boldly wrote, “I really think Mr. Kerr has been injudicious in advising so many to marry.” She then advised her thirty-year-old unmarried sister, “Will you not be solitary my dear Eliza or can you find in the discharge of the many duties now devolved upon you the compensation for the society of your most pleasing companion?” By asking her sister to find happiness outside marriage, Sally subversively (or maybe not so subversively) stepped outside prescriptive advice. But, she also assumed a social guardian role much like the novelists Susannah Rowson and Hannah Webster Foster did.³⁹⁷

Novels undoubtedly informed and reinforced Sally’s notions of genteel behavior. Scholars have shown that women turned to sentimental novels more than advice manuals for lessons on etiquette and behavior.³⁹⁸ Richard Bushman argues, “Of all the forms of print pouring from the presses, sentimental fiction played the most critical part in the extension of refinement to the middle class.”³⁹⁹ In fact, Bushman maintains that these novels made gentility accessible to middle-class Americans. Female readers delighted in the woman-centered plots and connected to the elegant domestic settings found in the pages of sentimental fiction. Characters were portrayed as refined and mannerly. They socialized in cultivated gardens and lived in comfortably furnished homes (see fig. 22 for an illustration from a Richardson novel). Just like the scenes in a Susanna Rowson or Samuel Richardson novel, Sally too set her performance of

³⁹⁷ Imbarrato, 140; SAH to Eliza Clark, March 11, 1811, in George E. Hastings, 86. Elizabeth Clark, Sally’s half-sister, remained single and died in 1814 at the age of thirty-three. She is buried in Donegal Presbyterian Church Cemetery next to her brother Brice Clark, Jr.

³⁹⁸ Kierner, 11; Blauvelt, 21; and Imbarrato, 141.

³⁹⁹ Bushman, 281.



Figure 22. Illustration in 1811 edition of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela: or Virtue Rewarded*.

This illustration depicts a domestic setting much like one Sally would have known as a genteel Anglo-American woman. The furnishings, including the desk in the foreground, the tall case clock, and the Queen Anne chair in the background, indicate the family's middling to upper-class status. The beehive and spinning distaff at the top of the image symbolize domesticity and industriousness. *Source*: Samuel Richardson, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, Vol. 1 (Manchester: Russel and Allen, 1811), 41.

gentility at various times in the parlor. For example, a “neat little Breakfast-parlour” in Strasburg, Franklin County⁴⁰⁰ and a “private Parlor” in Somerset County provided especially pleasing experiences for Sally amid the more usual rustic settings. Only in a novel, according to Cathy N. Davidson, would a woman like Sally meet someone like herself. In this respect, novels were one of the few printed sources in which women found validation in their female experiences.⁴⁰¹

By straddling public and private worlds and fact and fiction, novels intersected with travel writing. In the next section, I examine this intersection using the concept of liminality to discuss the role fiction played in the structure and character development of Sally’s narrative.

“A Passion for the Quill”

In the fall of 1800, Sally was living with her sister Rebekah Barton in Donegal Township, Lancaster County. Sometime between 1795 and 1800, she had separated from her husband, Enoch Hastings. The marital discord created economic and domestic instability for Sally and her children. She was ready for change. Her brother-in-law Joseph Barton and her older sister, Becky, were anxious to move to Cross Creek, a small settlement of approximately 1660 residents in Washington County (see fig. 23).⁴⁰² The women’s younger brother, Robert Anderson, seemed to be prospering out west. He had settled in the Washington County, Pennsylvania area,

⁴⁰⁰ Present-day Upper Strasburg in Franklin County.

⁴⁰¹ Davidson, 201.

⁴⁰² 1800 United States Census, Washington Township, Cross Creek, Pennsylvania, digital images, NARA Microfilm Publication M32, *FamilySearch.org*, accessed December 31, 2016,

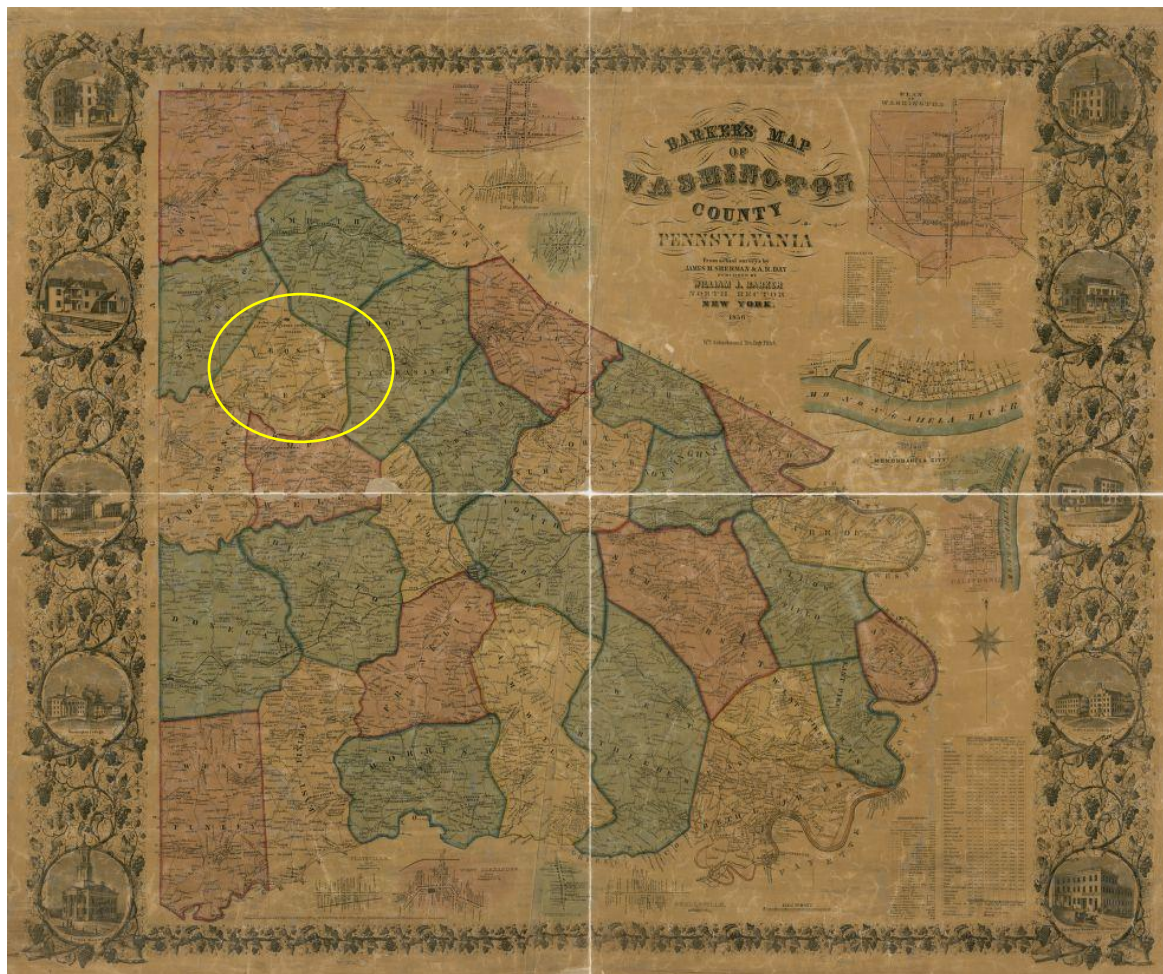


Figure 23. Barker's Map of Washington County, Pennsylvania, from actual surveys, 1856.

Sally lived with her sister, Rebekah Barton, at Cross Creek, Washington County from October 31, 1800 to 1805. Cross Creek is circled in the upper-left corner of the map. *Source:* James M. Sherman, A. R. Day, Wm., J. Barker, and Wm. Schuchman & Bro. Lith. (North Hecor, New York: William J. Barker, 1956). Library of Congress, accessed November 28, 2016, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2012592223>.

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9RZ8-3FW?mode=g&wc=3V1X-92C%3A1585149703%2C1585148326%2C1585150054&cc=1804228>.

southeast of modern-day Pittsburgh, several years before and was a successful farmer and merchant. A silversmith by trade, he opened his own jewelry and clock-making shop in the center of town in 1798. His recent marriage to local girl, Betsy Agnew, solidified his status as a respectable member of his new community.⁴⁰³

Washington County promised both Sally and the Bartons similar opportunities to better their fortunes. The Bartons would finally have plenty of land to farm and a home of their own making. Joseph had purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land in Cross Creek and had a partially constructed log house in the middle of the forest ready for his growing family to occupy.⁴⁰⁴ Currently, Sally and the Barton family were living in a house owned by Donegal's pastor the Reverend Colin McFarquhar in the village of Mount Joy, about ten miles east of

⁴⁰³ 1790 United States Census; Washington Township, Pennsylvania, M637, Roll 9, p.146, Robert Anderson, digital image 88, *ancestry.com*, accessed December 29, 2016, http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc=nNq2240&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&indiv=1&db=1790usfedcen&gss=angs-d&new=1&rank=1&msT=1&gsfn=robert&gsfn_x=0&gsln=anderson&gsln_x=0&MSAV=1&uidh=2d3&pcat=35&fh=14&h=345425&recoff=6%207&ml_rpos=15; 1798 Pennsylvania, U.S. Direct Tax Lists; US. Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889-1970; Anderson Family Bible on *ancestry.com*; Boyd Crumrine, *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania*, 476-564. Robert Anderson is elected sheriff of Washington in 1808, and in 1811, he is elected to the House of Representatives. Thomas Cushing, *History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: A. Warner & Co., 1889), 336.

⁴⁰⁴ 1798 U.S Direct Tax List cites Joseph Barton as owning 160 acres valued at \$576 and one house valued at \$16 at Cross Creek, Washington, Pa. 1798 U.S. Direct Tax list for Donegal Township, Lancaster County cites Joseph Barton as the occupant of a house owned by Colin McFarquhar. At the end of her narrative, Sally noted that the Barton's Washington, Pennsylvania house is in a forested area, as the "men are cutting a road to the House." She also described it as unfinished with "neither Window-glass, Plaster, nor Roof" (209).

Maytown. Rebekah, frail with consumption, had her hands full caring for three girls all under the age of six. But, she still welcomed her displaced sister Sally into her crowded household.⁴⁰⁵ Sally now felt obligated to step into another pair of shoes and act as a caretaker for her ailing sister. She hoped that a new environment might bring pleasure and peace back into her life.⁴⁰⁶ Perhaps she would even have more time to write. She had filled many a page up with her poetry. It would be challenging to try writing something different. Something that would give her the opportunity to experiment with several literary styles. Something that offered romance and adventure like the novels she had read. Something that might pass along life lessons to her friends, family, and anyone else who might happen upon her scribbles. Possibly, something that might even be published one day.

On October 7, 1800, Sally packed more than her writing instruments and journal into her party's covered wagon. She also carried with her intersecting ideas of morality and gender that were linked to her genteel values. According to Jennifer Bernhardt Stedman, these social constructions forced nineteenth-century female travelers to constantly "negotiate shifting social expectations" and "changing statuses of privilege and discrimination." Stedman explains that women travelers could lose "the benefits of white, middle-class femininity" if they acted in ways deemed unseemly and for "loudly expressing political opinions."⁴⁰⁷ To deflect this criticism,

⁴⁰⁵ Sally suggests her living situation in her narrative: "My sister (into whose Protection I have been thrown by the rough hand of unrelenting Adversity) has been, under divine Providence, my sole Dependence[sic]" (178)." The Barton's daughters were five-year-old Margaret; three-year-old Esther, and baby Eliza Jane, who was under one-year-old.

⁴⁰⁶ SAH, October 7, 1800, 177-178.

⁴⁰⁷ Jennifer Bernhardt Stedman, *Traveling Economies: American Women's Travel Writing* (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, 2007), 7.

women travel writers (consciously or subconsciously) creatively adapted various literary modes to maintain their genteel status.

Women's adaptations are not, however, simply imitative, as past critical assessment implied. Historians and other scholars often devalued the content and overlooked the artistic merit of early American women's writings, as Sara Mills has argued.⁴⁰⁸ They did not understand the intertextuality of women's travel accounts. As noted in the introduction, literary scholar Leon Howard, for example, found Sally's narrative to be aesthetically strange and declared that her frequent use of literary allusion "gives her writings their peculiar historical value."⁴⁰⁹ Even Sally's most admiring reviewer, George E. Hastings, viewed Sally's use of "tradition and convention" with a disparaging eye and of "no particular originality." He patronizingly wrote, "The ideas of Sally Hastings are interesting, not because they were original or influential, but because they show what an intelligent self-educated Presbyterian ... thought and believed."⁴¹⁰

It is Sally's use of "tradition and convention" that give her work value and interest. She clearly understood the importance of literary convention to tell a compelling story. It is her mixing of the different literary modes to traverse social constraints, as well as cultural boundaries, that is even more significant. Sally entered, literally and literarily, a wild space—the backcountry. She slogged across the state on foot. She climbed mountains. She shared meals, not to mention sleeping spaces, with plenty of unsavory characters both male and female.

⁴⁰⁸ Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 33.

⁴⁰⁹ Howard, 3, 81.

⁴¹⁰ George E. Hastings, 107, 111.

Bravery, stamina, and strength were not attributes traditionally assigned to women. Yet, Sally exhibited all of these traits and more. To present the “truly arduous” task of ascending the “Mountains on foot” without the sentimental frame of how she and her companions went “round the sides of the Mountain” to glean “the prospect of a delightful Garden” would remove the aesthetic soul from Sally’s self-constructed identity as an adventurous yet genteel woman.⁴¹¹

Family Tour to the West is like the fashioned creature in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Various parts from different literary genres come together in her narrative to animate the whole creation. Sally takes the standard forms of her time and transforms them into expressions of her own American and female experience. For example, Sally created multiple formulaic personas to represent herself. The conventional characters she used—devoted helpmeet, pioneer, sentimental heroine, and picaro (a) adventurer—were typical.⁴¹² However, Sally’s literary framing is multilayered and illuminates what she thought was important to reveal about herself in each instance. Marguerite Helmers and Tilar Mazzeo elaborate on this contextualization, “The self is constructed as a means of making sense of events that would otherwise remain incoherent.” Women’s stories, they note, often show a complex negotiation between “multiple selves and multiple layers of the self.”⁴¹³ Travel writing gave Sally the space to re-fashion her identity as both an adventurer and a sentimental heroine.

The following sections look at these aesthetic choices. I examine how she constructed a multilayered narrator that borrows from quest narratives, the picaresque, and sentimental fiction

⁴¹¹ SAH, October 11, 1800, 186.

⁴¹² Laffrado, 10-13.

⁴¹³ Helmers and Mazzeo, 6-7.

to construct an account that simultaneously upholds and contests authority. She adroitly works within this paradox to get her readers to see both the veracity and ridiculousness of American sensibility and sentimental ideals and values. It is this complexity that makes her narrative unique but also representative of women's travel narrative tradition.

“I Am in Every Sense of the Word, a Homebred Rustic”

From the outset, Sally establishes the connection between her narrative and storytelling. In the second paragraph in her first entry, she casts herself as an adventurer and a pleasure-seeker (although the second role is more gently suggested) in the mode of a traditional quest tale. This positioning distances her from the very real social and economic purposes of the journey alluded to in the narrative's first paragraph. Sally likely drew upon classic quest tales such as Homer's *The Odyssey*, Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as biblical stories like Moses' journey through the wilderness. However, Sally's narrative will not take her readers to a faraway place like the Mediterranean, or the English countryside, or even the Mount Sinai desert. Her readers will be rewarded with an account that features the “magnificent Productions” of Pennsylvania's backcountry. As her narrative's title states, Sally's remarkable tale of adventure will be a “Family Tour” of the American “West.”⁴¹⁴

The quest tale and travel narrative parallel each other in several ways. As Imbarrato notes, although these two narrative forms spring from different authorial objectives, they both belong to the larger category of travel writing. Both forms have a delineated starting and

⁴¹⁴ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

stopping point with “travel” as the main plot device. Other common elements include: a central narrator, who standing at a threshold of change, embarks upon a difficult journey hoping to gain some spiritual, intellectual, or material rewards at the end; and a plot marked by episodic adventures, trials, and hardships.

In addition, both types of narrators give commentary on their environs, as well as perceptive insights into human nature. Susan Lamb elaborates on this “web of relationships” connecting travel related material and representation “that has utterly permeated modern British, North American (and European) culture since the late seventeenth century.” According to Lamb, by the eighteenth century travel writing had already become “fictionalized.” She explains how a body of “communally accepted conventions” to interpret a travel experience was present and shared by both imaginative narratives, such as novels, and actual accounts.⁴¹⁵ In other words, it was no accident that Sally drew upon an array of established traditions to interpret and frame her own observations. As a woman, she was exposed (albeit marginally, as previously discussed) to the aesthetic and literary productions of the time. Thus, she was participating in a larger cultural expression that connected travelers, historians, poets, and writers.⁴¹⁶

In borrowing a quest type motif, Sally can more effectively locate herself as both the narrator and the heroine of her story. Sally is not literally a lone traveler or alone, but the narrative centers on her actions in and reactions to different scenarios. Her nine companions, including her sister and brother-in-law, rarely appear. In fact, when they do appear, they are

⁴¹⁵ Susan Lamb, *Bringing Travel Home to England: Tourism, Gender, and Imaginative Literature in the Eighteenth Century* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009), 16.

⁴¹⁶ Imbarrato, 133. SAH, 186, 192, 194, 195.

background characters and usually depicted as weak or absent from the scene. Sally's own strength and fortitude, for example, stand in marked contrast to her sister's recurring frailty: "My Sister is almost exhausted." "We travel slowly, my Sister's delicate Health not admitting of the violent Exercise." "My sister, unaccustomed to Difficulty, and totally exhausted with Fatigue ... wept." "My Sister, by the Assistance of a young Woman, almost as debilitated as herself ... made her way over."⁴¹⁷ This portrayal emphasizes Sally's self-perception as the center of attention and as the guiding force—the leader, the adventurer, the explorer, the helpmeet—of this "peregrination westward."⁴¹⁸

Like a quest protagonist, Sally's unhappy circumstances pushed her to make a life-changing journey. Casting herself as a "Child of Misfortune," Sally opined that she was seeking an "Asylum...far removed from the varied scene [of her] more prosperous days ... [and] ... independent Blessings."⁴¹⁹ She expected the tour to be filled with trials: "[I will] become so familiarized with Adversity," she wrote, "as to forget I once was blessed." Typically, the fictional questor is called away by special circumstances. So too was Sally: "Pleasure is not my sole Object in this Excursion ... There are two more potent, and I trust, more laudable Motives, stimulating me to undertake this Journey." The reader learns that her beloved sister is in "a declining state of Health," and Sally was sympathetically obliged to be her caretaker.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ SAH, October 11, 1800, 186; October 17, 1800, 192; October 23, 1800, 194.

⁴¹⁸ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

⁴¹⁹ SAH, October 7, 1800, 177.

⁴²⁰ SAH, 177-178.

As a genteel woman, how can Sally comment on the darker underbelly of frontier life without compromising her status? She positions her narrative, at least in parts, in relation to British sentimental picaresque texts, referencing and repeatedly alluding to Laurence Sterne's (1713-1768) *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759-67) and *A Sentimental Journey* (1766). His absurdly sentimental works are exceptionally amenable to Sally's intertextual, subjective narrative. Sterne used an epistolary travel frame and an episodic structure, however, his books defy strict classification into one genre. Often ascribed as realist fiction, his novels bring together humor, storytelling, autobiography, poetry, travel writing, and the picaresque. As such, they offered appealing models for others writing their own travel stories. Neil Cornwell states, "As an exponent of satire and ironic fiction, or the 'new subjective grotesque,' Sterne employed self-parody, digressions, bathos, dislocations of narrative and 'devices turning on the difficulty of communication.'"⁴²¹ As we have seen, Sally's narrative exhibits a similar complex of intertextuality. Further, his frequently ambiguous critique of morality, human behavior, and social order corresponded to Sally's own unresolved sensible worldview.⁴²²

Although not strictly picaresque works, Sterne incorporates components of this genre that work in tandem with Sally's self-fashioned adventurous narrator. J. A. Garrido Ardila explains how the picaresque form originated in Spanish literature during the sixteenth and early

⁴²¹ Neil Cornwell, *The Absurd in Literature* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006), 42.

⁴²² Carla Mumford, ed. *The Power of Sympathy by William Hill Brown and The Coquette by Hannah Webster Foster* (NY: Penguin Books, 1996), xxvii-xxvii. Historians have established that Sterne's works, especially *A Sentimental Traveler*, were among the most imitated models for other travel writers at this time. See Mary Celine-Newbold, *Adaptations of Laurence Sterne's Fiction: Sterneana, 1760-1840* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

seventeenth centuries. The genre quickly became transnational as German, French, and British novelists incorporated picaresque elements into their own travel adventure stories. Readers found the combination of intrigue and high-spirited adventure glossed over with a veneer of realism irresistible. The central character of a picaresque, known as a picaro, is a mischievous and irreverent “rascal.” He (or occasionally a she known as a picara) travels around the margins of society, makes pertinent observations, and gives readers humorous commentary on social customs and mores. “The male picaro survives by his wits through a series of often violent adventures and threats to his life,” Julia Epstein writes, “always remaining a marginal figure who resides half inside and half outside society.” Using comedy as a shield, picaros bring to light social ills and hypocrisies that can be rendered equivocal by the satire.⁴²³

Sally sets the stage for a sentimental picaro persona at the very beginning of her account. Writing about herself on October 7, she reflected, “[I] am in every sense of the word, a homebred Rustic; and enter on this Journey with those raised Expectations, which Persons of this description are apt to possess.” Traveling with servants and most likely slaves, Sally’s self-depiction as a “homebred Rustic” contradicts her real life genteel status. [An assertion which previous scholars of Sally’s narrative have taken on face value.] But, that inverted representation is exactly the point. Edward H. Friedman asserts, “Perhaps the most striking feature of picaresque narrative is its centering of a humble character, who, although disgraced and demeaned, has a voice and a presence in the text, which are rare for such a social type.” Is Sally now an insider or an outsider? Depending on the perspective one takes, there is no easy answer

⁴²³ For a detailed look at the origins of the picaresque, see J.A. Garrido Ardila’s *The Picaresque Novel in Western Literature: From the Sixteenth Century to the Neopicaresque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Epstein, 198.

to this question. As a rustic, Sally puts herself inside the backcountry culture but outside her own genteel one. Yet, her readers understand that this is a constructed literary-type identity, which puts her back into gentility. As such, Sally has created a very sophisticated and complex persona. Portrayed as simultaneously genteel and rustic, she perched herself strategically so she could more safely scrutinize the backcountry from this blurred perspective.⁴²⁴

Because Sally was both an observer and a participant—an object and subject—in her story, she needed a voice that would mesh these contrasting positions. As Davidson points out in her study of the early American novel, the picaro is “both witness and judge;” and the picaresque genre “both sanctions the society in which it is grounded and opposes it.” For early American travel writers, the picaro became “a crucial structuring device.” Furthermore, Davidson contends, “the picaresque allowed the early American novelist numerous fictive possibilities. To begin with, the writer could explore a full range of contradictory impulses within the new nation as well as a whole spectrum of different philosophical premises on topics as diverse as religion or legislative procedures.”⁴²⁵ While Sally was not writing a novel, she does portray people, places, events, housing, and landscapes situated at the margins of American life and culture.

To get her genteel readers to identify with her, she needed a sensible genteel positioning. Thus, Sally (re)conceptualized herself as different from backcountry inhabitants. Similar to a picaro traveling around foreign lands, Sally found herself like the proverbial fish out of water in Pennsylvania’s backwoods. She continuously bumped up against social situations that conflicted

⁴²⁴ SAH, October 7, 1800; Edwin H. Friedman, “The Baroque Picaro: Francisco de Quevedo Buscon,” in Ardila, 76.

⁴²⁵ Davidson, 164, 257.

with her genteel ideals regarding appropriate living conditions and behavior. Thus, two days into her journey, she engages her readers by apparently contradicting her self-proclaimed rustic status: “I would here remark, Madam, that it is one of the Misfortunes of Travellers, that their Situation excludes them, in a great measure, from the Society of those who are generally styled ‘the better Sort;’ and consequently, their observations are, for the most part, confined to the Populace.”⁴²⁶ So now, a mere fifty miles from her home, Sally has reengineered her persona to uphold her gentility amid cultural differences she perceived to be less than refined.

In part, the subversive power of Sally’s sentimental persona comes from the way she strikes an intellectual chord with her readers. She uses the popularity of this discourse to hit just the right note with her middling and upper class American readers. From the beginning, Sally flaunts the rhetorical strategies sentimental writers used to draw in sensible readers. In particular, the use of language associated with the senses—sight, sound, touch, hearing—was the linguistic currency of the discourse. Sarah Knott explains, “Novelists and historians alike sought to fashion a reader who entered into reading via immediate sensations and the witnessing of interesting scenes.”⁴²⁷ Hence, a night of revelry and dancing at an inn filled with military officers prompted Sally’s perfectly clichéd sensible description: “It was difficult to reconcile the different Sensations which their Dress and Employment created; yet, I must acknowledge, they were a Company of the most active and handsome Men I ever saw.”⁴²⁸ Sally’s expertly drawn

⁴²⁶ SAH, October 9, 1800, 181.

⁴²⁷ Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 53.

⁴²⁸ SAH, October 27, 1800, 202.

scene neatly ties together the threads of early republican sensibility: patriotic virtue (embodied in the sight of the “military officers”) and her sympathetic identity as a person of feeling (evidenced by her “sensations”).

Furthermore, as Sarah Knotts notes, sensibility’s nondenominational pedigree complemented Protestant providentialism. “Like ideas of natural rights, sensibility assumed a singular humanity,” she writes. Importantly, for white middle-class women, sensibility’s distinctions emerged not from gender distinctions but from class differences. Both men and women of refinement could share in mutual affection and sociable ties.⁴²⁹ Sally’s Sternian approach brought her into accord with the fashionable culture of her time. That is, she must have found some pleasure in debating the interconnected, transatlantic discourses of sensibility and Scottish Enlightenment philosophy. As Inger Sigrund Brodey notes, trends in moral philosophy at the turn of the nineteenth century skewed towards sensibility which elevated “the passions”—emotions—as “guides to moral behavior” and placed an “increased emphasis on the faculties of sympathy and imagination.”⁴³⁰ Sensibility was the bedrock of Scottish moral thinking. However, like any philosophy, different ideological points of view emerged.

For Sally, her journey to the West proved to be fertile ground to interrogate the veracity of these two divergent sentimental views. Immediately after establishing her rustic picaro identity, Sally *seems* to reveal her sensible point of view with a poem:

⁴²⁹ Knott, 189.

⁴³⁰ SAH, October, 7. 1800, 178; Inger Sigrun Brodey, *Ruined by Design: Shaping Novels and Gardens in the Culture of Sensibility* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2008), 14; Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, Knott shows how sensibility—she calls it the “sentimental project”—infused all aspects of early national culture, including medicine, art, politics, literature and philosophy.

Our most endearing Intercourses rise
 From mutual Weakness, Wants, and Sympathies;
 All are but parts of one complete Machine,
 And act subservient to one great Design:
 Here rests a pillar, there a pendant leans;
 This turns a wheel, and that a spring contains.
 By one great moving Cause in ev'ry Mind,
 Parts devious in themselves are all combin'd:
 'Tis potent Interest governs great and small,
 And sly Self-love's the masterkey in all.⁴³¹

Her declaration aligns with the Common Sense School belief that an individual's ability to identify with the discomfort of others ("mutual Weakness, Wants, and Sympathies") is innate ("one complete Machine"). Further, she implies that sympathy brings about a morally uplifting and improving response designed to alleviate that discomfort ("By one great moving Cause in ev'ry Mind"). This moral sense relied upon imagination—the ability to put oneself in the other's place. A precept that was closely connected to universal benevolence and love and pious behavior.⁴³² This belief centered upon domestic order and disciplined self-love as the heart of a balanced and harmonious society (see fig. 24 for a contemporary illustration of this precept). I would argue Sally posits this idea before her journey begins as a kind of a straw man only to be consistently knocked down via her picaro voice throughout her narrative.

Still, Sally's adaptations of the heroic (or mock heroic) mode are not absolute nor constant. The assumed novelty of Sally's female traveling experience (a "betwixt and between" status) required tactical mediation between domesticity and adventure. In addition, it is important

⁴³¹ SAH, October 7, 1800, 178.

⁴³² *Ibid.*

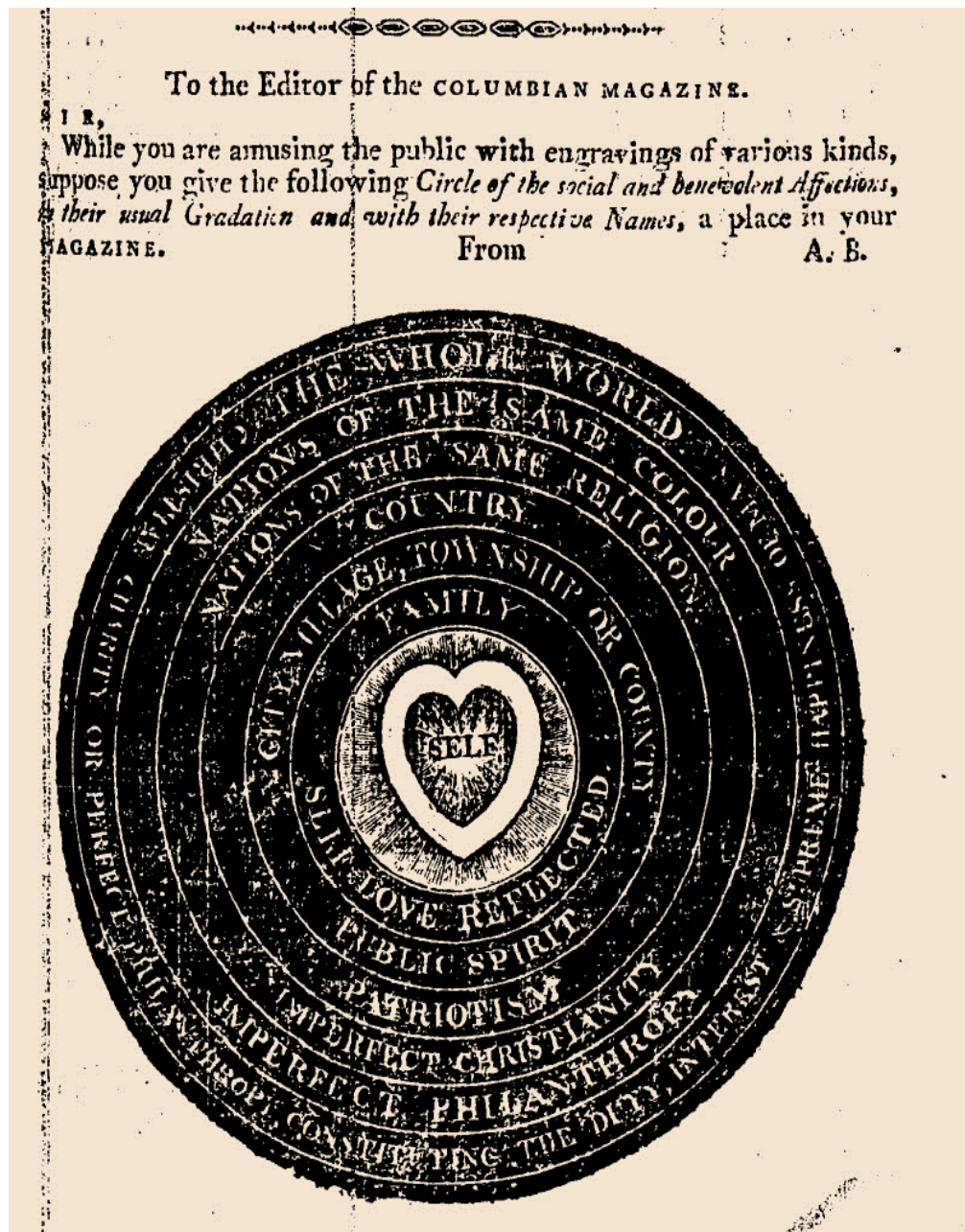


Figure 24. *Circle of the Social and Benevolent Affections*.

This diagram portrays sensible notions regarding the ideal relationship between individual persons and the wider society. Moving out from the “Self” at the center, the text is as follows: “Family: Self-Love Reflected;” “City, Village, Township or County: Public Spirit;” “Country: Patriotism;” “Nations of the Same Religion: Imperfect Christianity;” “Nations of the Same Color: Imperfect Philanthropy;” The Whole World: Christian Charity or Perfect Philanthropy, Constituting the Duty, Interest, & Supreme Happiness of Man.” *Source: The Columbian Magazine (1786-1790); Feb. 1789; 3, 2; American Periodicals, 109.*

to keep in mind that benevolent sensibility in post-Revolutionary America took on a different life from its British antecedents. It became deeply embedded with concepts of virtue. Thus, the capacity to sympathetically identify with others was a politically patriotic act. This connection between behavior and patriotic morality was especially daunting for women travelers as they encountered less than “civil” situations. Middle-class white women felt extraordinary pressure to maintain virtuous behavior in light of their elevated status as social gatekeepers. As we will see, Sally grapples with her own empathetic impulse as she reacts to backcountry society.⁴³³

Sentimental Adventurer

Both of Sterne’s narrators are travelers with picaresque-like characteristics. Yorick, in *Sentimental Traveler* (1768) critiques society as a self-declared “sentimental traveler” who desires to use travel as a means of understanding the world and himself. Objective, detached description is not what makes up Yorick’s story. Rather, he emphasizes what he *sees* and *feels*. The everyday, the ordinary, the common, the vulgar—as expressed through social interactions and connections between different kinds of people—take center stage. “What large volume of adventures may be grasped within the little span of life, by him who interests his heart in everything, and who, having eyes to see what time and chance are perpetually holding out to him as he journeyeth on his way, misses nothing he can fairly lay his hands on,” Yorick declares on

⁴³³ Imbarrato, 18-20. Imbarrato provides a concise summary of the political and social culture women travelers faced in the early national period. She notes that virtue and sensibility were “layered densely with gendered meanings” at this time, as well as weighted with economic and political freight. It was believed that virtuous sensibility was the key to maintaining democracy in a nation characterized by diversity.

the streets of Calais.⁴³⁴ Tristram Shandy in *Life and Opinions* (1759) is also a traveler, notably in volumes seven and nine. Like Yorick, Tristram takes on a picaro-like identity (both an insider and outsider), as an Englishman rambling around Europe dishing up a tale of self-reflection in search of the sympathetic bonds connecting human beings.

In the preface of *A Sentimental Traveler*, Sterne enumerates the vast array of traveling character types that exist in the world:

Idle Travellers. Inquisitive Travellers. Lying Travellers. Proud Travellers. Vain Travellers. Splenetic Travellers. Then follow: The Travellers of Necessity. The Delinquent and Felonious Traveller. The Unfortunate and Innocent Traveller. The Simple Traveller.

And last of all (if you please) The Sentimental Traveller, (meaning thereby myself) who have travell'd. and of which I am now sitting down to give an account.—as much out of *Necessity*, and the *besoin de Voyager*, as any one in the class.⁴³⁵

Sally ambiguously adopts Sterne's "last of all"—the "Sentimental Traveller" for herself. Like Yorick, she brings attention to the everyday, the ordinary, the common, and the vulgar. The lesser refined elements of frontier life—the "Huts;" the curious "Inhabitants;" and "the Jest profane, the Drunkard's Song"—take on a moral significance as she tries to find knowledge and fellow feeling in her journey.

Sally gives examples of people who act with "benevolent Hearts" after witnessing the suffering of her traveling party. Near the end of her narrative in Washington County, for instance, she relates an especially dispiriting experience when they could not find food and shelter. On October 30, she wrote with relief, "Last night we could find no Inn, at a suitable

⁴³⁴ Laurence Sterne, "In the Street. Calais," in *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, ed. Henry Morley (1768; repr., London, George Bell and Son, 1892).

⁴³⁵ Sterne, 566.

time; and were necessitated to ask Lodging at a private House. This was immediately granted; and we were received with an air of Cordiality that surprised me. I found that this Kindness was the genuine Expression of benevolent Hearts, who made it their Duty and Delight to render unto others as they, in like Circumstances, would wish to receive.”⁴³⁶ By including such illustrations, Sally upholds the notion of mutual affection. But, upon closer inspection, we can see a tinge of disbelief and wonder, a spark of ambiguity, in this entry (“we were received with an air of Cordiality that surprised me”). Although there are other entries that praise the benevolent hospitality Sally’s party received on their journey, most encounters miss the mark. As we will see, gender and national identity inescapably shade Sally’s picaro-sentimental persona that make it markedly different from Yorick’s optimistic tone.

Indeed, her bold critical evaluations seem to rebut Sterne’s sentimentalism. Only one day into the narrative, on October 8, she questions basic sentimental precepts relying on sympathetic identification. After an overnight stay at an inn in Dauphin County, Sally encountered a “thousand Rudenesses and Vulgarities,” among them a noisy drunken man, that were definitely not “in unison” with her “fine enthusiastic Sensibilities.” She pointedly dismisses sympathy as nothing more than a “fine spun theory.” Moreover, she takes aim at the discourse of universal benevolence: “Philosophers may argue as wisely as they please, and attribute what wonders they will, to Sympathy; and inculcate the Principles of universal Benevolence, with all the powers of Eloquence, and strength of Argument; yet, I am skeptical enough to disbelieve the former ever exists, in any great degree, except between Parties possessing congenial Dispositions.”⁴³⁷ Here,

⁴³⁶ SAH, October 30, 1800, 206.

⁴³⁷ SAH, October, 8, 179.

she challenges prevailing intellectual authority, and more so, she exposes the weaknesses of sensibility as a means of social harmony and control.

What accounts for Sally's ambivalent attitude towards sentimental philosophy? As noted, Sterne inspired many travel writers to take a subjectively sentimental approach in their own accounts. But, post-Revolutionary America presented a unique set of sociopolitical and economic concerns that differed immensely from similar concerns across the Atlantic. Thus, American appropriation of British forms, including the picaresque and sentimental fiction, reflects these idiosyncrasies. As such, a short discussion of this context follows in order to better understand Sally's adaptation of the sentimental traveler.

First, Sterne openly presented his narrators, according to Edward Watts, "as outsiders excluded from direct social meaning from the start." Americans, on the other hand, tended to "announce themselves as informed insiders."⁴³⁸ Both Tristram Shandy and Reverend Yorick travel abroad to the European continent to attain their special insider/outsider status. Therefore, Sterne's displaced narrators had safer ground from which to pass social judgment.⁴³⁹

Sally's narrator position, in contrast, feels more perilous. "This day I am to start for Washington, Pennsylvania," she wrote at the beginning of her story, immediately giving it an American frontier and marginal setting. As an American woman traveling in the American backcountry, Sally risked moral injury to both her republican womanhood and citizen identities.

⁴³⁸ Watts, 22.

⁴³⁹ Davidson, 169. Davidson notes that situating a picaresque novel on foreign ground was "safer for the author than keeping it rigorously at home." She continues to state that American authored picaresque works at this time, although mostly "homebound," usually featured at least one or two ocean voyages or European excursions. In this way, the writer could blend the exotic and familiar which cast a sense of realism over the entire text.

As we will see, her criticism often deflates national mythology regarding the wilderness as an idealized site for American improvement, enterprise, competency, and order.⁴⁴⁰

Watts further explains how Sterne and his “imitators” used absurdity as a mechanism to reveal a deeper order beneath social chaos. Juliet McMaster agrees with this argument and contends that the “mingled misunderstandings” and the “eccentric preoccupations” Sterne created in *Tristram Shandy* are used to show that sympathy can bridge the gap between different perceptions and understandings.⁴⁴¹

American writers, on the other hand, do the opposite. They employed the picaresque to reveal “a deeper American chaos” that lurked beneath what Watts calls, “a façade of order, both political and linguistic.”⁴⁴² This directly oppositional approach provoked Americans into thinking differently about distinctly American issues. Expressly, concerns over social order within the public and private realms arising from decolonization and trying to establish a stable political entity.

Westward expansion magnified these issues by bringing the nation’s social and cultural regional differences into sharper focus. Freedom, liberty, equality, progress, happiness, and self-improvement—these values were woven together to create a shared American narrative. But, an unraveling of the story felt imminent when competing visions of what these ideals actually meant polarized the new nation. Would a more egalitarian society, one that extended political power to

⁴⁴⁰ SAH, October 7, 1800.

⁴⁴¹ Watts, 22. Juliet McMaster, “Uncrystallized Flesh and Blood: The Body in *Tristram Shandy*,” *Laurence Sterne*, ed. John Walsh (New York: Routledge, 2013), 38.

⁴⁴² Watts, 22.

the lower classes, threaten social order? This question informed the debate. Generally, on one side (represented by the Federalists), members of the gentry believed governing of the nation should remain with the right sort of men —elite, wealthier, and better-educated. Their opponents (represented by the Democratic Republicans), instead, favored a more egalitarian governance, one in which men from the middling classes also might be elected to serve as legislators. For many intellectuals, sensibility seemed to offer a means to deal with sociopolitical and economic differences and conflict while maintaining republican ideals.⁴⁴³

Sally's narrative then is set distinctly within this complex political landscape. As discussed in previous chapters of this dissertation, Sally continually stepped into scenarios that were microcosms of the larger national story. Davidson describes this period as "divisive" and characterized by "contradictory political realities," stemming from a complete restructuring of the social and political order. She explains how a rancorous partisan debate, exemplified by the Federalist and Republican parties, "spread throughout American society." Both sides used different sides of the tyranny coin to promote their viewpoints: the Republicans smeared the Federalists as dictators and monarchists; the Federalists denigrated the Republicans as Jacobins and promoters of mob rule. In fact, Davidson writes that the factional partisanship was so pervasive that "the nation seemed, to many Americans, on the verge of another revolution." By noting the continuing presence of a "military Garrison at Pittsburg" and the "military Appearance which the Public roads exhibit" in her story, Sally alluded to the militia forces stationed in the region in the wake of the Whiskey Insurrection and recent conflicts with

⁴⁴³ Knott, 189-190.

American Indians.⁴⁴⁴ As such, her comments reminded readers of the potential for violent political uprisings in the nation.

Consequently, Sally's picaresque allusions follow an American inversion of the form. Upon arriving in Carlisle, for example, Sally directly referred her readers to the "Story of the Nose, related by the inimitable STERNE" to describe the perceived disorder rendered visible by the "impertinent Curiosity" of the town's residents.⁴⁴⁵ The story to which Sally references occurs as an interpolated tale in volume four of *Tristram Shandy*. "Slawkenbergius's Tale" is about Diego, a young man who has a common trait with Tristram, an abnormally large nose. He travels to the town of Strasburg where his unusual countenance creates an insatiable curiosity among the townspeople. A fierce debate develops, and the townspeople take sides on whether the nose is real or fake. Much has been made by literary scholars of the bawdy double-entendres in Sterne's quixotic retelling of the tale. Ultimately, however, Sterne's retelling served to uphold sympathetic idealism that our capacity to relate to others, despite our differences, bonds us together as human beings. Whereas, Sally used the allusion within an allusion within an allusion to differentiate herself and point out a social disconnect, a breakdown in traditional class hierarchy, which she viewed as a violation of the norms of cultivated sociability.

In addition, Sally reverses the picaro adventurer gaze back upon herself. At least four times, she unhappily remarked that the backcountry residents possessed too much "of that popular ingredient, Curiosity." She presented herself as a "Diego," an "exotic" stranger, as viewed through the eyes of the lower-class inhabitants. In effect, a self-portrait of herself as a

⁴⁴⁴ SAH, October 29, 1800, 205; Davidson, 152-155.

⁴⁴⁵ SAH, October 9, 1800, 181.

proper woman of the middling class was created. Yet, in describing herself from the others' (outsiders) viewpoint, Sally paradoxically confirms and contests her social position. As Elizabeth A. Bohls contends, this type of reaction by a genteel woman traveler "reminds her of her own out-of-placeness and makes her whole endeavor momentarily strange." Rather than evincing empathy, the scrutiny of others leaves Sally feeling ambivalent—both empowered and diminished. The reader too is left with ambiguity—who is the outsider? Who is strange?⁴⁴⁶

Throughout her narrative, Sally obliquely challenges sensible principles with examples of observed human behavior. Moreover, she adopts the *picaresque* characterization to parody the absurdity of the experiences. For example, this description begins innocently enough but builds to a satirical musing at the end:

The Landlord, who had been all day absent, on his return, seemed determined to compensate for his Lady's Inattention, by devoting all his time and talents to our Amusement. But it unfortunately happened, that, among the number of his Pasttimes, whistling was the most conspicuous; and he filled every pause in his Conversation with a gust of that irritating Music, to the great annoyance of my sensitive Nerves.

Before he retired, I was obliged to confess to myself, that the most insufferable thing, which disagreeable People can engage in, is the attempt to be Amusing; that it requires as able Assistance, from Nature, to constitute a complete Fool, as to form a complete Wit; and that, without such Assistance, all Attempts, at either, are only too contemptible to be ridiculous.⁴⁴⁷

She exploited the vocabulary of sensibility ("Amusement," "Conversation," "sensitive Nerves," "Nature," "Wit") to subversively undermine it. Keeping in mind that sensibility's notions are

⁴⁴⁶ SAH, October 29, 1800, 205; Bohls, 192; Georgi-Findlay, 102. Georgi-Findlay makes similar observations in her study of women's travel narratives from the overland period.

⁴⁴⁷ SAH, October 23, 1800, 198.

grounded in physical sensitivity to external stimuli, the language focuses on the body as a conduit for feeling. Influenced by Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, early national Americans invested the senses, especially sight and sound, with “ethical, didactic, and emotional power,” according to Inger Sigrun Brodey.⁴⁴⁸ Sally harnesses this power to exaggerate the discordancy between the philosophical ideal and the actual experience. Rather than gaining sympathetic “Amusement” from the landlord’s company, the relatively slight sound of a whistle is magnified. It becomes a “gust” and a “great annoyance” that reveals social disharmony.

Sally at times parlays the picaro voice by interrupting the description with poetry. At a Carlisle inn on October 10, Sally begins the entry with a paragraph alluding to “a variety of vexatious Incidents” which had “almost metamorphosed” her into “a snarling Cynic.” She implicitly contrasts the “repulsive looks and behavior” of the Landlady with the “Intelligence and Respectability” of a fellow lodger before interposing a portrayal of the indolent landlord, described as “one of those inoffensive Creatures,” with a poem. Adopting an impish tone, she draws upon the sense of sight in this instance by presenting the poem as a “sketch of his Character:”

They eat, they sleep, they walk about,
 Go here and there, and in and out;
 But, neither think, contrive, nor do,
 Things good, or bad, or old, or new.
 Not wise of speech, of heart, or head;
 Nor quite a Fool, alive, nor dead;
 Who purpose just to live and die;
 But care not how, nor when, nor why.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸Brodey, 14; Bohls, 192. Bohls likewise explores women’s subversive use of aesthetic language as a means to critique the era’s cultural discourses in her examination of Mary Wollstonecraft’s travel narrative.

⁴⁴⁹ SAH, October 10, 1800, 182.

Sally's humorous depiction of the landlord as a curious zombie-like creature (not "alive, nor dead") feels quite modern. For the early national reader, however, this portrayal undermined sensibility's emphasis on sympathetic feeling among human beings.

Sally's rhyming couplets playfully reign in the discomfort she experienced in this situation—a mixture of pleasure and pain. But, the poem is immediately followed with a more serious paragraph that suggests the relative poverty of the area. As noted in earlier chapters, Sally pointed out to her readers that Pennsylvania's frontier with its small, crude log huts and uncultivated land demonstrated a lack of refinement. As such, Sally gives an ironically sentimental glimpse into backcountry life that destabilizes early republican idealism on two fronts: 1) her depiction of the lazy landlord deflates notions of a virtuous republic made up of sensible, hard-working, intellectual citizens, and 2) her description of the landscape casts doubt upon utopian Jeffersonian agrarianism.

Thus far, I have explored Sally's adaptation of the picaresque form as a structure for her social commentary. I have shown how Sally used the voice of sentimentalism as an educated genteel woman to intellectually maneuver around socially perilous situations. But, how does she utilize this characterization to elide criticism when she places herself in physical danger? The picaresque genre, as described earlier, celebrates *male* freedom and *male* ability to judge. This freedom, according to Cathy N. Davidson, was an authorial liberty that women quite simply did not have because of social and political constraints. That is to say, readers can accept this self-determined mobility in male characters, even social outcasts, but not in female characters.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁵⁰ Davidson, 179.

Traditionally, a feminized picaresque necessitates both justification and narrative deception. In fact, Davidson finds that most picaras (a female picaro) masquerade as men carrying out the charade for virtuous purposes, such as the Revolutionary War soldier, Deborah Sampson. She further argues that fictional female picaras exist in stories that are essentially sentimental novels with a spliced in picaresque motif. However, I would like to reverse this argument by maintaining that Sally's narrative can be read as a picaresque with a spliced in sentimental motif. Namely, Sally fuses elements of a sentimental heroine onto her character in the more adventurous scenarios. She does not literally don the garb of a man, but she does literarily put on some romantic tropes to cover up endeavors that may be perceived as too masculine.⁴⁵¹

Dangerous, tricky mountain crossings, for example, infuse her narrative with opportunities for Romantic drama. Dark, gloomy conditions typify the climbs: "After immense Difficulty, in climbing the steep ascent (rendered doubly difficult by the showers that were falling, which made the Road so slippery that it was often impossible for us to keep our feet) we came to a Fire, about half a mile from the summit. Here on the brow of the solitary Mountain, three poor Families had passed the Night." Sally underscores the risk in another entry the next day: "Considering our Situation, the Condition of the Mountain, the darkness of the night, and the inclemency of the weather, it is a Miracle to me that we all arrived safe at the base of the Laurel Hill." The trek down the mountain was no less perilous: "To ascend these Mountains on foot (and not one of us will ride over them) is a talk truly arduous. To descend them, is by no

⁴⁵¹ Davidson, 179; 185. Popular novels featuring picara characters include Herman Mann's *The Female Review: Life of Deborah Sampson: The Female Soldier in the War of the Revolution* (1797) and *The History of Constantius and Pulchra* (1789-1790).

means less difficult; as they are exceedingly stony, that one can scarce get stable footing, for one yard in a place.” These situations required bodily strength, leadership, and power, as such they destabilize Sally’s picaresque characterization.⁴⁵²

Consequently, she knits together picaresque and sentimental fiction tropes to fashion a romantic heroine identity. Genteel heroines in novels such as Hannah Foster’s *The Coquette* (1797), Susanna Rowson’s *Charlotte Temple* (1791), and Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740) often faced danger that required similar “manly” acts of physical stamina, bravery, and daring. One passage in particular is striking in the way Sally presents herself as a quick-witted leader and survivalist, as well as an engaging storyteller. On October 23, she describes how she almost single-handedly saved the family from an uncertain fate when crossing the Laurel Hill Mountains. Recent rains rendered the steep and rocky ascent even more slippery and perilous than usual. Using spare, conventional description and punctuating with semi-colons, Sally captured the melancholy atmosphere of the scene: “The Cold was intense; Night came on, with pitchy darkness: and my Sister, unaccustomed to Difficulty, and totally exhausted with Fatigue, was obliged to sit down with her children on a rock; where she wept.” At that moment, Sally seized control: “Our Situation admitted no other alternative,” she melodramatically added, “[other] than perish on the Hill, or make our way over it on foot ... I perceived the necessity of making an extraordinary Exertion.” In the end, Sally heroically carried the children in her own arms to safety across the mountain.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵² SAH, 186, 187, 195.

⁴⁵³ SAH, October 23, 1800. 194-195.

In the next paragraph, Sally obliquely tempered her actions in a way that reveals the assumed deviance of her actions. She turned the episode into a morality lesson: “The circumstance of my carrying two Children in my arms, more than half my own weight, upwards of two miles, is not so extraordinary as I first imagined,” she reflected, “and I am now sensible, that the human system, either animal or rational, possesses Abilities far beyond the knowledge of their Owners, and such as they will by no means credit the existence of, until some unforeseen Occurrence gives them an opportunity themselves.”⁴⁵⁴ In contrast to her sardonic picaro characterization, Sally upholds sentimental ideals by attributing her actions to universal moral codes of conduct. This contradiction undermines her image as an exceptionally powerful, strong, brave woman. But, it allowed her to straddle between genteel feminine respectability and masculine potency.

Other times, Sally establishes the romantic sentimental persona by presenting herself as a moral protector. She sets up a bleak situation in Westmoreland County on October 24 that almost could have been lifted from the pages of a novel. The “morning is snowy, and very cold,” she glumly wrote, and the “half-perished Family cannot long endure the fury of the Storm.” Apparently, the congested road conditions have prevented them from accessing their wagon and obtaining dry blankets and clothing. In this dire situation, melancholy reigns supreme, as Sally bravely “soothes the Anguish” of the children, “who are crying because of the cold,” by wrapping them in her “Cloak.” The romantic heroine mode is emphasized with an emotional poem that practically drips with sadness:

With sympathetic Cares opprest,
I on the dreary Mountain rest;

⁴⁵⁴ SAH, October 11, 1800, 186.

Conflicting Storms of sleet and snow,
 Do round my head unpitying blow;
 While angry winds, with eager strife,
 Congeal the crimson tide of life;
 And raw condensing damps impart
 Their chilling influence to the heart:
 Far off from every social joy,
 I heave the deep despairing sigh;
 Chide unrelenting Fate sever,
 Recall the past, and drop a Tear.⁴⁵⁵

In this passage, Sally sees herself as a romantic heroine. Replete with terms springing directly from sentimental fiction (“sympathetic,” unpitying,” “heart,” “social joy,” “sigh,” “Fate,” and “Tear”), she has shaped her emotional response into a moral activity that subtly plays down the very real dangers. Although these approaches, as Davidson argues, do not “overtly challenge the status quo,” they were extremely important in giving women alternate ways of seeing themselves. Thus, Sally’s self-conscious presentation positioned her as an active participant in events outside of domesticity.⁴⁵⁶

Sally’s narrative shows us how women used literature to structure their own stories. But, it also opens a window into her mind that allows us to see how women engaged with the philosophies of the time. In using a picaresque frame, Sally dramatizes her journey and demonstrates a self-conscious engagement with her backcountry surroundings. She shifts in and out of the adventure persona, modifying and changing it as she confronts situations that challenged her worldview. She does not merely copy or mimic the British picaresque form or

⁴⁵⁵ SAH, October 24, 1800, 198-199.

⁴⁵⁶ Davidson, 184.

romantic sentimentalism. But, she creates a narrative that demonstrates both a uniquely American voice and a female voice that paradoxically utilizes convention to challenge it. As such, her ambiguous positioning as a genteel woman navigating a changing social landscape illuminates the ways in which gender and culture complicate the story of westward settlement.

Conclusion

Sally traveled across Pennsylvania at least two more times before settling permanently in Washington County in 1808. In 1806, she departed from Cross Creek and returned to Maytown, bringing three of her nieces (Rebekah Barton's children), Margaret, Eliza Jane, and Anna, with her.⁴⁵⁷ Hetty, Rebekah's second oldest daughter, stayed in Cross Creek, presumably with her father, Joseph Barton. In the late spring or summer of 1808, however, Joseph Barton died. Barton's death may have prompted Sally to go westward again that same year. While her brother Robert attended to financial matters in settling Barton's estate, it appears that Sally saw to the care of her orphaned niece, Hetty.⁴⁵⁸ This time Sally lived in the town of Washington with her brother Robert Anderson until her death in 1812.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁷ "An Old Time Journey," *Harrisburg Patriot*, August 26, 1876, America's Historical Newspapers. Published upon the death of Sally's niece, Margaret Barton, this newspaper story recounts Margaret's memories regarding the 1800 journey she made with Sally from Lancaster County to Cross Creek, Washington County. The article also states that Margaret returned with Sally to Maytown in 1806. Anna and Eliza Jane are not mentioned in the article. However, they are buried in Donegal Presbyterian Cemetery; thus, it seems likely Sally also brought them with her to Lancaster County in 1806. Esther, also known as Hetty, the Barton's other daughter, remained in Washington County.

⁴⁵⁸ Probate Account for Estate of Joseph Barton, Pennsylvania Wills and Probate Records, Washington, File B, 1825-1839, ancestry.com, accessed January 31, 2017, <http://ancestry.com>. Robert Anderson administered Joseph Barton's estate. These probate records indicate Barton died sometime after May 10, 1808 and before August 26, 1808. These records show that his widow was Nancy McComb. However, I have not been able to determine when they were married or whether they had any children together. In a letter to her half-sister, Elizabeth Clark, written in 1811, Sally mentioned that Sarah (her daughter) and Hetty (her niece) helped her with the domestic work. It stands to reason that Hetty joined the Anderson household at the time of her father's death.

⁴⁵⁹ SAH to Friends and Family in Lancaster, June 29, 1808, in George Hastings, 67-68. Correspondence between Sally and her Lancaster County friends and family shows that she was living with Robert by late June 1808.

Sally, now in her late thirties, played a prominent role in the Anderson household. As she had done in the Barton family, Sally helped Robert's wife, Elizabeth, with the domestic duties. The Anderson household was a busy one that included seven children from 1808 to 1812.⁴⁶⁰ In addition to the watch-making and jewelry store in the town square, the Andersons also managed the farm in Allegheny County where Robert grew wheat and raised livestock such as hogs and sheep.⁴⁶¹ Upon Elizabeth's death in 1810, Sally assumed sole responsibility for managing the home. Sally also acted as primary caretaker for the children until Robert remarried in 1811.⁴⁶² "Let your mind at ease my dear brother, with respect to your children," Sally reassured her brother in an 1811 letter. Robert was visiting family in Lancaster when Sally wrote, "... they [the children] know no other mother than myself and I am certain feel for me all the affection due to that tender relation, and I assure you that their state of dependence on myself has greatly endeared them to me."⁴⁶³ These sentiments suggest Sally became a significant

⁴⁶⁰ The children in the Anderson household from 1808 until 1811 were as follows: Samuel Anderson (b. 1801), Robert Anderson (b.1803), Elizabeth Anderson (b. 1805), Brice Clark Anderson (b.1808), Enoch Hastings, Jr. (b. 1793), Sarah Hastings (b. 1795), and Hetty Barton (b. 1797).

⁴⁶¹ SAH to Robert Anderson, December 22, 18[11], in George Hastings, 71. In this letter written to her brother from Washington when he was visiting Lancaster, Sally mentioned the farm work that needed to be done, such as wheat "not yet threshed," sheep that needed to be sent to the farm, and hogs that needed to be butchered.

⁴⁶² "Margaret Anderson Obituary," *Washington Reporter*, March 15, 1810, America's Historical Newspapers. Robert Anderson and Jemima Taylor Wedding Announcement, *Washington Reporter*, November 18, 1811, America's Historical Newspapers.

⁴⁶³ SAH to Robert Anderson, December 22, 18[11], in George Hastings, 71. George Hastings states that Robert Anderson took his new wife, Jemima, "on a wedding trip" to his "old home" in Lancaster County at this time.

member of the Anderson family. Robert's growing political importance in the town, however, presented Sally with the opportunities for the intellectual engagement she so treasured.

Although Sally lived on the edge of the frontier, she actually experienced a dynamic social life. Robert's genteel status in Washington society and his political importance placed the Andersons at the heart of the developing town's culture. When he was elected sheriff in October 1808, the Andersons and Sally literally lived at the center of the town, either in or near the town's courthouse and jail.⁴⁶⁴ A fairly new, respectable two-story brick structure finished in 1794, the courthouse was located at the southwest corner of the public square, giving Sally ready access to Washington's cultural happenings.⁴⁶⁵ One can imagine that Sally probably valued her participation in the town's literary society the most. In correspondence, she told family and friends that the group (whom she termed "all the Literati of this place") met at the Anderson's courthouse home. "This is the real seat of the Muses," she wrote, "talents are understood and admired...." Sally may have been thinking of her own "talents" when she added that her presentations at the society were met by "unbounded applause" from the group.⁴⁶⁶

Sally's letters give us other glimpses into Washington society. One intriguing example speaks to the evangelical revivalism that was sweeping through the nation's backcountry at this

⁴⁶⁴ George Hastings, 65-73.

⁴⁶⁵ Washington County Courthouse, Washington County History and Landmarks Foundation. Last modified 2017, http://www.washcolandmarks.com/content_570005383.html. This building was the community's second courthouse, as fire destroyed the first building, a log structure, sometime between 1790 and 1791. The brick courthouse was used until 1839.

⁴⁶⁶ SAH to Friends and Family in Lancaster, June 29, 1808, in George Hastings, 67-68.

time. “We had two Ministresses from Massachusetts last week,” Sally wrote in 1811. The event, like other publicly staged sermons drew large crowds. Sally noted,

The Courthouse was thronged beyond any former occasion. One of the Ladies fraught with all the charms of melody addressed us for the space of I think a full hour. Her language was pure eloquence but her sentiments fraught with a more deadly poison—all under the imposing garb of female modesty. The other address was shorter. I was taken up by a friend to the bench and honored by an introduction to them.⁴⁶⁷

From Sally’s description of the female preachers, we get a sense that she admired the women’s abilities to command their audiences. Surely, Sally found parallels to her own unconventional life upon meeting women who dared to go beyond the borders of expected feminine behavior. Sally’s comment regarding one of the “Ladies” who delivered a sermon of “deadly poison” wrapped in the cloak of “female modesty” might be a description similarly applied to Sally’s own writing.

Sally had some renown in American society during the last few years of her life. She seemed to be acutely aware of her luminary status and commented to family that “...the very celebrity of my character renders me the more conspicuously observable.”⁴⁶⁸ In fact, her celebrity as a published author and poet led townspeople to erroneously conclude that she wrote a scathing editorial about social life west of the Alleghenies that appeared in the September 29, 1810 edition of the *Washington Reporter*. The article, signed with the penname “Bonus Homo,” criticized the local seminary’s (Washington College) recent commencement exercises, which included theatrical productions, fencing, music, and other entertainment, as morally offensive.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, 72.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ “Correct Compendious Account of the late Exhibition of Washington College,” *Washington Reporter*, September 29, 1810, America’s Historical Newspapers.

Sally did not want to be associated with a condemnation of her community that she viewed as unfair. She took the unconventional step—yet again—of stepping outside the private sphere and submitted her own letter to the newspaper. With her pen, she made it clear that she did not write the letter that so many townsfolk found offensive. She also defended the college and the town’s civic and religious leaders against the charges *Bonus Homo* leveled.⁴⁷⁰

Sally’s public letter precipitated a fascinating newspaper debate between her and *Bonus Homo*. It turns out that *Bonus Homo* was Alexander Campbell, the twenty-one year old son of Scottish Presbyterian preacher Thomas Campbell, a leading minister who led an evangelistic reform movement on the American frontier.⁴⁷¹ From the period of October 15 to November 5, 1810, Alexander Campbell and Sally responded to each other in a series of letters published in the *Washington Reporter*. As in her travel narrative, Sally peppered her newspaper letters with satire, poetry, and literary allusions. For example, in one letter, Sally responded to the young Campbell’s criticism of her rhetorical talents by alluding to her authorial experience and celebrity status. Her literary style, she argued, had been the subject of “public admiration” by many while Campbell was just a “helpless infant ‘mewling and puking in his nurse’s arms,’” a

⁴⁷⁰ Sarah Hastings, Editorial, *Washington Reporter*, October 8, 1810, *America’s Historical Newspapers*.

⁴⁷¹ *Disciplehistory.org*. Alexander Campbell joined his father in leading the reform movement known as the “Disciples of Christ.” The movement began in 1809 in Washington County, Pennsylvania and resulted in the founding of numerous nondenominational Christian churches.

reference to a line from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.⁴⁷² Sally, it seemed, retained her nimble way with words and biting, sarcastic wit up to the end of her life.

Sally Anderson Hastings died of consumption on April 30, 1812 at the age of thirty-nine. Sally was most likely buried somewhere in Washington County. If a stone or monument had been placed in the ground to mark her existence, it no longer can be found. However, as noted at the beginning of the dissertation, on May 4, 1812, the *Washington Reporter* published an obituary for Sally. The notice declared that a “numerous train of relatives and acquaintances must bewail the loss of an amiable woman, and society be deprived of a bright genius—one of the first female Authors of the present age.”⁴⁷³ This memorial, found on a printed page of a newspaper—a public medium that played such an important role in the lives of so many early national Americans, seems to be a more fitting and lasting tribute to a woman who saw herself as both an author and a poet “with a passion for the Quill.”⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷² Letter to Bonus Homo, October 20, 1810, *Washington Reporter*, America's Historical Newspapers.

⁴⁷³ Qtd. in George Hastings, 89.

⁴⁷⁴ SAH, October 17, 1800, 193.

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